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Mr. Whytes best regards to his go
The Vol. he now leaves as a token of
in Pool Lane it contains as far as
the Sheridan Family ever published
Mr. Whyte flatters himself will

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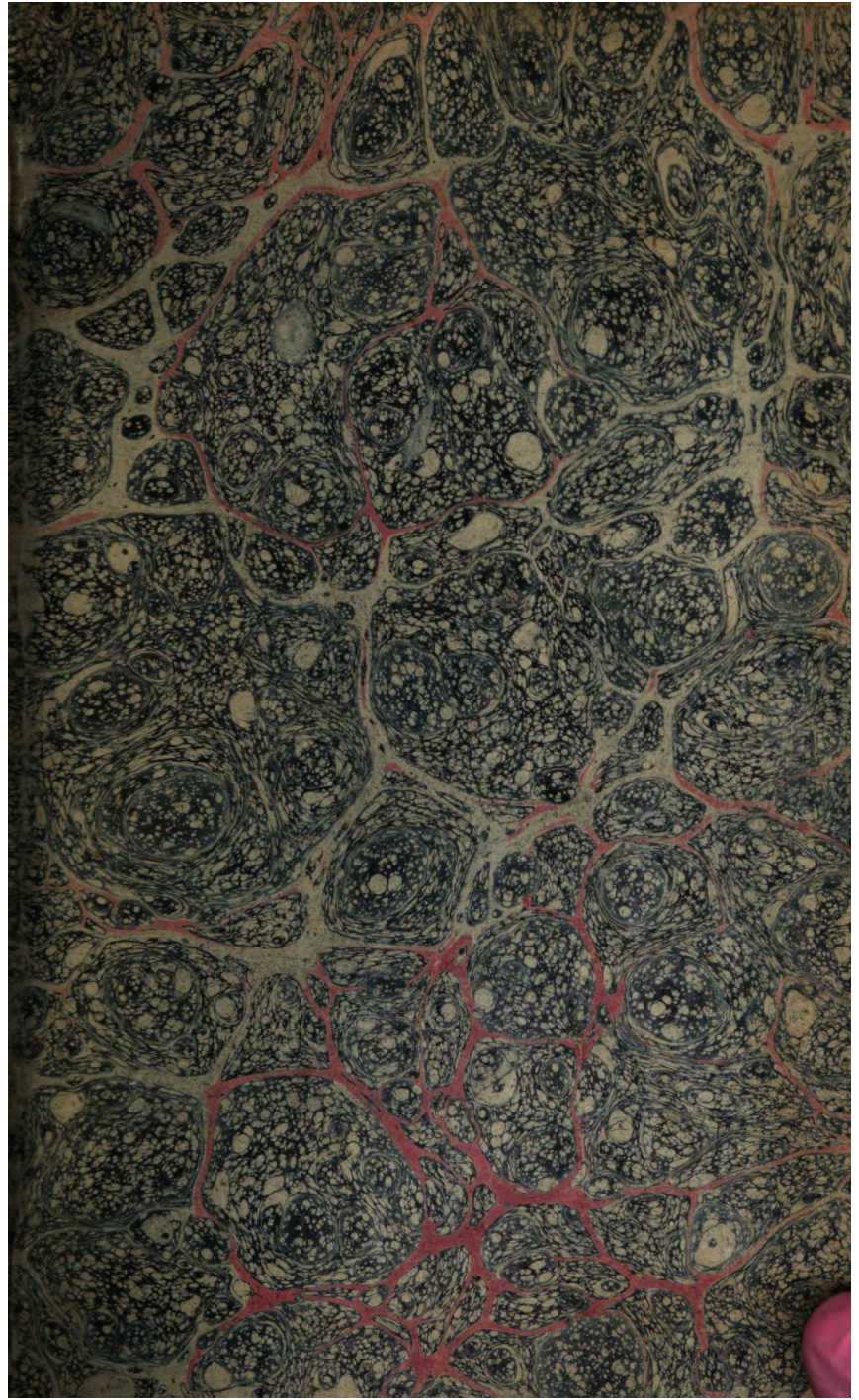

From D. Hall

The leaf near the end signed
*Bb is a cancel designed to
replace leaf Bb 4 in Poems on
various subjects, 3rd ed., 1795
(270 j. 705), in which the word
SELECTED is misprinted 'CELECTED'.

270 e. 1515

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A 4

MISCELLANEA NOVA;

CONTAINING,

AMIDST A VARIETY OF OTHER MATTERS CURIOUS AND INTERESTING,

REMARKS ON BOSWELL'S JOHNSON;

WITH CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONS,

AND SOME NEW ANECDOTES OF THAT EXTRAORDINARY CHARACTER:

A CRITIQUE ON BÜRGER'S LEONORA;

IN WHICH SHE IS CLEARLY PROVED OF ENGLISH EXTRACTION;

AND AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

ON THE

ART OF READING AND SPEAKING IN PUBLIC,

IN TWO PARTS.

BY S. WHYTE, AND HIS SON, E.-A. WHYTE.

DUBLIN:

Printed by Robert Marchbank,

FOR THE EDITOR,

EDWARD-ATHENRY WHYTE, NO. 75, GRAFTON-STREET;

OF WHOM IT MAY BE HAD, AND OF THE BOOKSELLERS.

1801.

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PREFACE.

THE REMARKS on MR. BOSWELL'S LIFE OF DR. JOHNSON were, on their firſt publication, annexed as an APPENDIX to the Third Edition of WHYTE'S POEMS, for which they were originally drawn up, as referred to in the ſetting out; but, leſt it might ſwell the volume to too great a bulk, many paſſages were omitted, which, tho' the form remains the ſame, are in this detached Edition reſtored, and a conſiderable portion of freſh matter occaſionally introduced. Several Original Papers by way of farther Proof and Illuſtration, never before printed, are alſo given; which, it is imagined, will be a treat to the curious in literary hiſtory, and deemed, not improbably by many, the moſt intereſting part of the work. The preſent performance, without any pretenſions to rivalſhip, has a chance to be read by ſome who have not ſeen Mr. Boſwell's volumes, and others, who have peruſed them, may not have them at hand; ſeveral paſſages are therefore cited verbatim, which might otherwiſe have been ſpared: the following extract from his preface is likewiſe given as a ſpecimen of his manner, and as a key to certain paſſages and alluſions in the courſe of the REMARKS, which, without it, might appear diſingenuous or obſcure.

Thus then Mr. Boſwell aſſerts his prerogatives, and denounces the tribe of objectors..... "I, at laſt, deliver to the world a Work which I have long

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promiſed, and of which, I am afraid, too high expectations have been raiſed. The delay of its publication muſt be imputed, in a conſiderable degree, to the extraordinary zeal which has been ſhewn by diſtinguiſhed perſons in all quarters to ſupply me with additional information concerning its illuſtrious Subject; reſembling in this the grateful tribes of ancient nations, of which every individual was eager to throw a ſtone upon the grave of a departed Hero, and thus to ſhare in the pious office of erecting an honourable monument to his memory.

"The labour and anxious attention with which I have collected and arranged the materials of which theſe volumes are compoſed, will hardly be conceived by thoſe who read with careleſs facility. The ſtretch of mind, and prompt aſſiduity by which ſo many converſations were preſerved, I myſelf, at ſome diſtance of time, contemplate with wonder; and I muſt be allowed to ſuggeſt, that the nature of the work, in other reſpects, as it conſiſts of innumerable detached particulars, all which, even the moſt minute, I have ſpared no pains to aſcertain with a ſcrupulous authenticity, has occaſioned a degree of trouble far beyond that of any other ſpecies of compoſition. Were I to detail the books which I have conſulted, and the inquiries which I have found it neceſſary to make by various channels, I ſhould probably be thought ridiculouſly oſtentatious. Let me only obſerve, as a ſpecimen of my trouble, that I have ſometimes been obliged to run half over London, in order to fix a date correctly; which, when I had accompliſhed, I well

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I well knew, would obtain me no praiſe, though a failure would have been to my diſcredit. And after all, perhaps, hard as it may be, I ſhall not be ſurprized if omiſſions or miſtakes be pointed out with invidious ſeverity. I have alſo been extremely careful as to the exactneſs of my quotations; holding, that there is a reſpect due to the Publick which ſhould oblige every Author to attend to this, and never to preſume to introduce them with —— 'I think I have read,'—or—'If I remember right;'—when the originals may be examined."

Advertiſement to the firſt Edit. p. vii. viii. ix.

Again: "*It ſeems* to me, in my moments of ſelf-complacency, that this extenſive biographical work, however inferior in its nature, may in one reſpect be aſſimilated to the ODYSSEY. Amidſt a thouſand entertaining and inſtructive epiſodes the HERO is never long out of ſight; for they are all in ſome degree connected with him; and HE in the whole courſe of the Hiſtory is exhibited by the Authour for the beſt advantage of his readers.

"Should there be any cold-blooded and moroſe mortals who really diſlike this Book, I will give them a ſtory to apply. When the great Duke of Marlborough, accompanied by Lord Cadogan, was one day reconnoitering the army in Flanders, a heavy rain came on, and they both called for their cloaks. Lord Cadogan's ſervant, a good humoured, alert lad, brought his Lordſhip's in a minute. The Duke's ſervant, a lazy, ſulky dog, was ſo ſluggiſh, that his Grace, being wet to the ſkin, reproved him, and had

for

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for anſwer, with a grunt, 'I came as faſt as I could.' Upon which the Duke calmly ſaid, 'Cadogan, I would not for a thouſand pounds have that fellow's temper."

Advertiſement to ſecond Edit. p. xv. xvi.

The honour of a Nation greatly depends on its literary characters; and, beſides gratifying curioſity, it is of ſome importance, that the little which can generally be collected of their own lives, ſhould be fairly and honeſtly reported. It is true, Johnſon's are rare; and a Boſwell, who could patiently act the humble ſervant, the beſt part of his life, for the purpoſe of furniſhing the memoirs of an author by profeſſion, is a phenomenon in literature; it is a felicity that all, who have deſerved well of the Public, are not to expect. Their works will ſpeak for themſelves, and poſterity will perhaps do juſtice to their merit; in other reſpects, they labour under peculiar diſadvantages, and muſt abide the common fate. National prejudice, private pique, and the jealouſy of contemporary wits may rudely aſſail them, and often, in direct proportion to their merit, they become objects of calumny and reproach; ſuch a procedure, however common, neither promotes the intereſts of virtue, nor contributes to the happineſs of ſociety. It is the vice of little minds, and a ſcandal to the republic of letters. A great character, in worthy ſituations, is an object of virtuous contemplation; but that minuteneſs of Anecdote, that oſtentatious diſplay of trifles, which we ſometimes meet with, is a vicious indulgence of inquiſitive impertinence; a flagrant breach of private confidence, and

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and an infringement of the rules of good breeding. 'Tis like intruding on the ſacred privacy of beauty to expoſe her in ungracious ſituations. What is the world wiſer or better for being told, that Semiramis loved a game at romps; that Alexander the Great had the hiccough; the Czar Peter on his travels took a pinch of ſnuff and ſneezed; or that the Author of the Rambler paired his own nails, or performed any other of the petty offices common to his kind?* Such puerilities might anſwer an end in the hands of honeſt Joe Miller, and ſerve as decorations to a jeſt-book; but are a diſgrace to the pages of hiſtory, which ſhould exhibit finiſhed portraits of life for inſtruction, not a uſeleſs farago of caricatures.

The retailer of what are called good things treads on a ſlippery ſurface, and ſhould do it with judgment and reſerve. Wit, particularly of the colloquial kind, is a ſort of mental electricity, ſudden in its effect, and evaneſcent in its nature. Many things tell well enough in a private circle, where all are on the gape, prepared for the broad grin, and the prejudice in your favour; which, abſtracted from local aſſimilations, cut but a ſorry figure upon paper. Witneſs the numerous collections of repartees, and bon mots, from Seutonius's twelve Cæſars, to Boſwell's Memoirs of Johnſon inclnſive. The ſportive ſlippances of converſation, the little triumphs of petulance, or caſual ebullitions of ſpleen, may paſs for the moment, and, when the laugh is excited, have fully anſwered their end; but when indulged to the prejudice

* Vide Addenda, p. 49, (a) New Anecdotes of Johnſon.

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prejudice of a deſerving member of ſociety, and obtruded as hiſtorical deſignations of character, they ſhew a pitiful ambition in the fool that uſes them, and, except to expoſe him, are unworthy of record. To apply Mr. Boſwell's own ſtory—"I would not for a thouſand pounds have that fellow's temper."

Whether Mr. Boſwell comes properly within this deſcription, every reader will determine for himſelf; but ſuch were the reflections which occurred to the writer of theſe pages on peruſal of that elaborate production. Of the very many eminent characters mentioned in the courſe of thoſe volumes, there is ſcarcely one, but firſt or laſt, is preſented in a diſadvantageous light, and marked with ſome comparative draw-back, as a foil to heighten and ſet off the conſequence of his illuſtrious friend. It was an unneceſſary proſtitution of applauſe; Dr. Johnſon was ſufficient in himſelf; admitting the facts, there would have been a merit in retrenchment. The ſhades of his own character, if not wholly concealed, might have been ſoftened, and thrown into the back-ground, without injury to any; his weakneſſes could not be improved by compariſons, and his excellencies ſtood in no need of ſuch invidious ſupport. *De mortuis nihil niſi bonum*, ſays the adage; Dr. Johnſon's reading, *De mortuis nihil niſi verum*, is not clearly an amendment; *bonum* implies *verum*. Biographers are not upon their oath, and if in nothing but the truth is to be underſtood the whole truth, it involves an impoſſibility; for the truth *in toto* can never be obtained;

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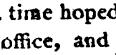
obtained; and after all, if the whole truth were within compaſs, a great part would be nugatory and ridiculous; the ſtraining after which is but a vain prodigality of time, and an affected parade of impartiality to no end. We have proofs and precedents enow conſtantly before us, and need no monitor to ſhew what little things are great men.

Mr. Boſwell's Life of Johnſon derives importance from the ſubject, and has been generally read; on the ſame account it will find its way into the repoſitories of learning. We envy not his honours, and only wiſh he had pruned away certain morbid excreſcencies, and, with a little more circumſpection, made choice of his ground; it would have been more of a piece with his pompous declarations, and precluded the neceſſity of an antidote, conſequently the preſent attempt.

The writer of theſe ſheets is conſcious he has need of many apologies; but his intentions are pure; he ſeeks not to tear the well-earned laurels from the brows of any man; it would be an idle conceit, equally illiberal and abſurd. His only aim is to ſet in a proper point of view, and do juſtice to, what he conceives, an injured character; the character of a good man, which he cannot ſuppoſe in any light to be properly a ſubject of obloquy or contempt. He for a time hoped he ſhould have been ſpared the friendly office, and has to regret it was not taken up by abler hands.



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PREPARING FOR THE PRESS,

A NEW EDITION

OF

POEMS

ON

VARIOUS SUBJECTS,

ORNAMENTED WITH PLATES,

AND ILLUSTRATED WITH

NOTES, ORIGINAL LETTERS, AND CURIOUS INCIDENTAL ANECDOTES.

IN THE COURSE OF WHICH,

THE PRETENDED MIRACLES OF VESPASIAN ARE EXAMINED AND DETECTED.

BY SAMUEL WHYTE.

THE FOURTH EDITION,

CAREFULLY COLLATED WITH THE AUTHOR'S LAST IMPROVED MANUSCRIPT,

BY EDWARD-ATHENRY WHYTE, F. C. T. C. D.

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REMARKS

ON

BOSWELL'S JOHNSON.

——DAMNS WITH FAINT PRAISE. POPE.

UPON a careful reviſal of the preceding ſheets, previous to publication, the Editor was led by ſome circumſtances occaſionally mentioned to conſult Boſwell's Life of Dr. Johnſon,* particularly the paſſages reſpecting the late Mr. Sheridan; and could not help obſerving, that an unprejudiced Reader, judging of its accuracy and impartiality from thoſe ſpecimens which are pretty copious, would hardly be inclined to think very advantageouſly of that multifarious production. Facts, where facts are reſorted to, glaringly perverted; commendation ſneakingly and invidiouſly beſtowed; ill-natured ſtrictures unneceſſarily, as they are on moſt occaſions unwarrantably, introduced; and frequent contradictions, as to Mr. Sheridan, are its predominant characteriſticks. Our Author has in one ſtriking inſtance taken the taſk of reſcuing his Friend's reputation from wanton and unmerited obloquy upon himſelf.† And the Editor, with deference preſumes, that the moſt ſanguine of the Doctor's and his Biographer's admirers will not be diſpleaſed, upon the principles of equity to the living as well as the dead, to ſee a curſory inveſtigation of the reſt impartially attempted. Some may think it a ſubject of little importance; the lovers of truth and literature may poſſibly entertain a different opinion. The lovers of literature will think that the

* Or rather Boſwell's own life under the umbrage of Johnſon's. . . . 3 vols. 8vo. 2d edit. London, 1793.——Vol. i. p. 342, paſſim.——The firſt edit. which bears date April 20, Anno 1791, was in quarto.

† See the real Hiſtory of the Gold Medal given to the Author of the Tragedy of Douglas, WHYTE'S POEMS publiſhed by the Author, (in the EXTRACTS inſerted for convenience, at the end of the work) page lxvi, likewiſe p. lv. ibid.

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annals of literature ſhould be preſerved pure; and what was an object in the Life of Johnſon,—or why elſe introduced?—cannot be indifferent to the admirers of candour and truth.

Boſwell ſays,* "when I returned to London in the year 1762, to my ſurpriſe and regret, I found an irreconcileable difference had taken place between Johnſon and Sheridan. A penſion of two hundred pounds a year had been given to Sheridan. Johnſon, who thought ſlightingly of Sheridan's Art, upon hearing that He was alſo penſioned, exclaimed, "What! have they given HIM a penſion? then it is time to give up mine."—Sheridan might have retorted in the language of Jaffier, *'tis to me you owe it.*—Boſwell attempts to palliate, though not wholly to juſtify, that unprovoked ſally; and, leaving his readers under whatever impreſſion to their reflections, after an unneceſſary detail of extraneous circumſtances, at the end of two pages he tells us—"Johnſon complained that a man who diſliked him, repeated this ſarcaſm to Sheridan, without telling him what followed, which was, that after a pauſe he added," .... "However, I am glad that Mr. Sheridan has a penſion, for he is a very good man." "Sheridan," continues Boſwell, "could never forgive this haſty contemptuous expreſſion; it rankled in his mind; and though I informed him what Johnſon had ſaid, and that he would be very glad to meet him amicably, he poſitively declined repeated offers which I made, and once went off abruptly from a houſe where he and I were engaged

* See Boſwell, vol. I. p. 343, 4. Johnſon was the avowed enemy of Scotland and Scotchmen, and no friend to the Stage; yet he wrote a play, and whimſical to think, "the eaſe and independance to which he at laſt attained by Royal munificence," [p. 447,] he owed, it ſeems, to Scotch Actors, who played for his Benefit, under the Management of an Iriſh Prompter; for Lord Loughborough himſelf acknowleges, rather ſupercilioufly, "Sheridan rang the bell:" and, to carry on the metaphor, when the performance was over, the panegyriſt of Auchinleck comes in for his ſhare with the life of Johnſon, in three ponderous quartos, by way of Epilogue.—The firſt edition is in this inſtance referred to.

engaged to dine, becauſe he was told that Dr. Johnſon was to be there* .... I could perceive that Mr. Sheridan was by no means ſatisfied with Johnſon's acknowleging him to be a good man. That could not ſooth his injured vanity. I could not but ſmile, at the ſame time that I was offended, to obſerve, Sheridan, in the *Life of Swift* which he afterwards publiſhed, attempting, in the writhings of his reſentment, to depreciate Johnſon, by characterizing him, as, ... "a Writer of gigantic fame in theſe days of little men." .... Mr. Boſwell was offended! poor Gentleman! .... and look ye, Sirs! he was tickled withal, and he ſmiled! or peradventure *in the writhings of his Reſentment*, more appoſitely to give it, in the pictureſque Language of Milton, he 'grinned horrible a ghaſtly ſmile.' But in the event of this antithetical criſis, ſtill true to his text, not an iota eſcapes him of Sheridan's Provocations.... Had Meſſrs. Boſwell and Co. an excluſive patent for offence? ... Dr. Johnſon had previouſly attacked Sheridan's friend Swift, and in the moody ſpirit of detraction he contemptuouſly treats him as a writer; he reprobates him as a man, and, in order to level him with the loweſt of the ſpecies, he brands that very Swift, a Clergyman, a Dignitary of his own Church, the Dean of St. Patrick's, with folly in the extreme; prevarication, which is lying of the worſt kind, and cowardice.† Theſe are the odious ſtigmas which Dr. Johnſon avowedly labours to attach to the character of an eminent Divine; for his abilities looked up to by the Great, and for his unexampled charity and conduct in his paſtoral calling, by the lower orders of the community, where his memory is yet held in reverence, almoſt adored. What writer but the encomiaſt of Savage could dirty his pages with ſuch foul-mouthed aſperſions? Swift perhaps had his particularities; but was Dr. Johnſon the man to throw the firſt ſtone? He perhaps

* This vexatious Dinner-Party is brought again upon the tapis, vol. iii. p. 594. † See Johnſon's Poets and Sheridan's Swift, p. 449, &c.

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perhaps was remiſs in his court to the Doctor's arrogated ſuperiority;* he perhaps might aſpire to equality, and equality in the vocabulary of vanity implies rivalſhip. The world cannot contain two Suns. What, Swift! the Vicar of Laracor! was HE a Sun? Nay, Sir! that was enough, more than enough to rouſe 'the conſtitutional indolence of Johnſon,' to ſeize every opportunity of unſphering him. His common expreſſion in talking of him was, "That Swift was a very ſhallow fellow." Could any ordinary acquaintance, much leſs a friend, endeared to him from infancy and bound to him by unremitting offices of kindneſs, ſtand by and tacitly authorize ſuch malevolent calumnies by paſſing them unnoticed? Sheridan could not, and for that he is traduced! The Rambler, a valuable periodical paper, contains many ſplendid declamations on morality, and the author, under that deſcription, his Biographer holds forth as the Mirrour of Truth; but another writer, who was no ſlave to prejudice, and in his own perſon little prone to 'the thundering tongue of ſaucy and audacious eloquence,' has left a few unvarniſhed lines, that ſhew him not unverſed in the ſcience of life, by which that profound maſter of Ethics, without diſparagement to his talents or blemiſh to his memory, might have profited; and his lectures would not have been the worſe attended to. Boſwell was poſſibly too much engroſſed in his lucubrations, recollecting and minuting down the day's eventful hiſtory, to read ſuch flimſy rhapſodies as Othello, or poſſibly never *ſoberly* conſidered, except when the Firm† were to come in for ſnacks, that

Good

* See Boſwell, 2d edit. as before, vol. i. pp. 108, 416, 522, vol. ii. p. 103, and vol. iii. p. 310, where Sheridan's opinion of Johnſon's implacable reſentment againſt Swift is alſo noticed; and I have myſelf often heard the cauſe ſo aſſigned, aſſerted as an eſtabliſhed truth.

† *Firm*. . . a Term in commercial uſage, implying the oſtenſible head, proprietor or proprietors of banks, and mercantile houſes, who ſometimes

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Good name in man and woman
Is the immediate jewel of their ſouls.
Who ſteals my purſe, ſteals traſh; 'tis ſomething, nothing;
'Twas mine; 'tis his, and has been ſlave to thouſands;
But he, that ſtiches from me my good name,
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed. SHAKESP.

But the traducing of Sheridan was not the only object. Mr. Boſwell had other irons in the embers, and we ſhall preſently ſee more is meant than meets the ear. His own character, a little more attentively ſcrutinized, may help us to develop the myſtery; let us decypher it. Pope, who had alſo ſome knowlege of mankind, affords us a criterion:

Search then the ruling paſſion; there alone
The wild are conſtant and the cunning known;
That clue once found unravels all the reſt,
The proſpect clears and Wharton ſtands confeſs'd, &c.

For Wharton read Boſwell; his ruling paſſion was the luſt of a niche among the literati. Without entering into a particular examen of his pretenſions, he was calculated to move in a ſecondary orbit and wanted conſpicuity. From his youth up he was troubled with an incurable and dangerous malady; by profeſſor Juvenal, an acknowleged adept, termed *Cacoëthes Scribendi.** Being of a communicative turn; redundantly loquacious and a confirmed egotiſt, the minutiæ of anecdote and biographic detail, requiring no extraordinary degree of invention, and depending more on memory than genius, ſuited his talents;

find it good policy to admit a nominal partner to a ſmall dividend on the profits, without any acceſſion to the capital, which ſo circumſtanced ſtands in the name of the Firm, as it might be Johnſon and Co. . . . The word in this acceptation is not in our copy of the Dictionary.

* . . . . . Tenet inſanabile multos
Scribendi cacoëthes, et ægro in corde ſeneſcit. Juv. Sat. vii. v. 52.
The curſe of writing is an endleſs itch. DRYDEN.

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talents; and ſo intoxicated was he with the vanity of ranking as an author, that ere the tonſor had well cleared the down from his new-reaped chin* he tore himſelf from his mother's apron ſtrings, and made a journey of ſome hundreds of leagues by land and by water in queſt of a ſubject. Such was his diffidence, and the diſtruſt he entertained of his powers! A defect, which ſome hereditary ſtrength of nerves, and a little experience in life, enabled him to get the better of; as by the tenour of his writings is demonſtrated..... We do not perceive any very uncommon marks of originality in his exuberant and ponderous journals to entitle him to the envied diſtinction he aimed at; but the lucky choice of a ſubject is of the firſt importance to an author, and ſo far we believe him in the ſecret. In the way of attraction the celebrity of the ſubject is not unfrequently as much looked to as the merits of the performance, of which all readers cannot be ſuppoſed competent judges. For inſtance, not to degrade our Biographer by compariſon,† Homer is perhaps as much indebted to Troy as Troy is to Homer, who, as well as Mr. Boſwell, as the criticks will have it, ſometimes nods. However, without any temptation of friendſhip to praiſe or to abuſe him, we muſt give our author (as he now ranks) credit for his journey. The complexion of affairs abroad was inviting; Corſica was ſtruggling for her liberties under the auſpices of her brave patriotic General, a ſecond Cato! The world had all its eyes on Paoli; his life was a deſideratum; Mr. Boſwell was on the ſpot; by Mr. Boſwell it was written, and, till curioſity fell aſleep, undeniably it was read: Fame and profit went hand

* Quo tondente gravis juveni mihi barba ſonabat.
Juv. Sat. i. v. 25, & Sat. x. v. 226.

† The application is not unfounded: vide Preface to Johnſon's Life, p. xv. Be not aſtoniſhed, gentle Reader! There may you ſee the ingenious Author of that extenſive Biographical Work, in his moments of ſelf-complacency, by aſſimilation, claiming kindred with the venerable Ancient. If haply ſome future Pope ſhould *do it into Verſe*, our maſter of Aſſleck [as the name is pronounced] will have both rhyme and reaſon to be vain.

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hand in hand; an enviable denouement for a first attempt; and a flattering earnest of future success.

His next speculation lay nearer home, and London was the scene of operation; an ample field for enterprize, and a soil not ungenial to oddities. He had tried his powers, and now was the time to improve upon his System. By lucky construction, *Noscitur a Sociis*, was an adage in his favour. He frequented the societies of wits, and enlisted, as was his bent, in the train of singular characters; none more singular than the extraordinary man, to whom at last he contrived to get himself introduced, for the purpose of shewing him off in all his attitudes, and gratifying the world with his Memoirs; in every point of view a heavy and laborious task; but what will not a man do to be for ever known?* The patriarch Jacob, not irreverently to speak, served Laban two apprenticeships for a wife; our obsequious Biographer served Dr. Johnson three, a more imperious slave-driver, for a feather.† Now, *the prospect clears and Boswell stands confess'd.* He had to wriggle himself into the good graces of Johnson; to accumulate matter and to make a Book; to ensure notoriety and pocket the emolument. Freedom of opinion and liberty of speech; the obligations of friendship and the ties of kindred must give way; even his dear country falls a sacrifice to the caprice and prejudices of his Idol. Mr. Boswell, with his usual address, anticipates the charge,

* See Cowley's Works—the Sentiment is his.

† In the Summer of 1761, Mr. Boswell tells us Mr. Sheridan read Lectures on the English Language, &c. in Edinburgh, at which time his acquaintance with him commenced; and his acquaintance with Dr. Johnson, Anno. 1763. See vol. i. p. 343. Thus speaks he for himself. "This is to me a memorable year; for in it I had the happiness to obtain the acquaintance of that extraordinary man whose memoirs I am now writing: an acquaintance which I shall ever esteem as one of the most fortunate circumstances of my life."—N. B. His Work had been anticipated by three or four competent Biographers, whom, in his way, he very cordially bespatters.

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charge, and affects to deſpiſe the imputation.* But, maugre all his fineſſes, if Mr. Boſwell, at the ſhrine of the venerated ſage, did not bewray his own neſt, no two-legged animal, ſince Adam to ſave appearances uſed the fig-leaf, ever did. *Cedite Romani ſcriptores, cedite Graii.* Mr. Boſwell full of the inſpiring god, and proſtrate at the feet of his divinity, uncorks the incenſe-vaſe of adulation ;† himſelf the high prieſt officiates at the altar of his own rearing; and, it is a rule without an exception, all things, animate and inanimate, muſt bow down to Baal. Sheridan, who never abuſed Scotland, and had confeſſedly rendered him many acceptable kindneſſes, was the firſt victim. A miſunderſtanding ſubſiſted between Johnſon and Sheridan; it could not be kept a ſecret; Boſwell perceived it, and like a keen-eyed politician takes advantage of the hint. To ſay nothing of the private uſes he made of it in paying his devoirs tete-a-tete, the paſſage before us is a maſter-ſtroke in its way; every thing that might bear hard upon Johnſon is extenuated; every thing that could make againſt Sheridan is preſſed forward and dilated; not ſatisfied with an orderly and connected ſtatement of facts, which is the great merit of a hiſtorian, like a true partizan, he beats abroad for matter, and in defiance of all chronological arrangement, to which in other caſes he faſtidiouſly confines his narrative, he foreſtalls the ſucceſſion of events; reſorts to widely diſtant periods, and dwells on topics wholly irrelative to the affair in hand; an artful manœuvre to conceal his real views, by which 'thoſe who read with careleſs facility,' a numerous claſs, are impoſed on. The attention is called off, and diverted to new objects, and the original cauſe of difference, embarraſſed with foreign circumſtances, is thrown into ſhade and loſt ſight of. Thus craftily ſhifting his ground, the odium of commencing hoſtilities is transferred to Sheridan, and by a ſtudied

* See Boſwell as before, vol. i. p. 350 paſſim.

† *Incenſe-vaſe* of adulation, alias his Ink-horn.

a ſtudied latitude of phraſeology an inſinuation is conveyed, that he, Boſwell the *ſmiler*, had actually ſeen in manuſcript the obnoxious paragraph referred to in Sheridan's Life of Swift, which, as he ſays, was afterwards publiſhed; meaning, as he would have it underſtood, at a very ſhort interval; though not a line of it was then, or for full twenty years afterwards, committed to paper. By this carious pretext a prejudice is created in favour of his maligner, conſequently operating to the diſadvantage of the character injured, whenever his name occurs, which is by no means ſeldom, in the remainder of that and the two ſucceeding volumes. Having thus ſettled the preliminaries and adjuſted matters to his ſatisfaction, in the overflowings of ſelf-complacency our Biographer, to take it as before on his own report, *ſmiled*, and incontinently proceeds——

"This rupture with Sheridan deprived Johnſon of one of his moſt agreeable reſources for amuſement in his lonely evenings; for Sheridan's well-informed, animated, and buſtling mind never ſuffered converſation to ſtagnate; and Mrs. Sheridan was a moſt agreeable companion to an intellectual man. She was ſenſible, ingenious, unaſſuming, yet communicative. I recollect, with ſatisfaction, many pleaſing hours which I paſſed with her, under the hoſpitable roof of her huſband, who was to me a very kind friend." * . . . Mr. Boſwell, for the purpoſe of quitting ſcores with his

C very

* The remaining part of the paragraph muſt not be omitted..... "Her Novel, entitled MEMOIRS OF MISS SIDNEY BIDDULPH, contains an excellent moral, while it inculcates a future ſtate of retribution, and what it teaches is impreſſed upon the mind by a ſeries of as deep diſtreſs as can affect humanity, in the amiable and pious heroine, who goes to her grave unrelieved, but reſigned, and full of hope of *Heaven's mercy*.—Johnſon paid her the higheſt compliment upon it: *I know not, Madam! that you have a right, upon moral principles, to make your Readers ſuffer ſo much.*" Boſwell's Johnſon, vol. i. p. 353, 4.

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very kind friend, has him again in the ſame volume thus ... " Talking of a barriſter who had a bad utterance, ſome " one, to rouſe Johnſon, wickedly ſaid, that he was unfor- " tunate in not having been taught oratory by Sheridan;"* and then commits him to the laceration of Johnſon and Garrick, which he gloſſes with the ſubſequent defence:

" I ſhould perhaps have ſuppreſſed this diſquiſition concerning a perſon of whoſe merit and worth I think with reſpect, had he not attacked Johnſon ſo outrageouſly in his Life of Swift, and at the ſame time, treated us, his admirers, as a ſet of pigmies. He who has provoked the laſh of wit, cannot complain that he ſmarts from it."†

Alas, poor Yorick! 'tis true he could not complain; for he was ſleeping in peace with his fathers before thoſe notable animadverſions ſaw the light ‡. . . Let us now fairly examine the premiſes. . . *Ecce iterum Criſpinus!* . . . Sheridan's Life of Swift again prematurely preſſed into the ſervice! . . . Is not this ſomething like writhing? . . . ſeveral years back, according to the manifeſtation of events, he had us upon the ſame ground; he confeſſed himſelf offended; but he rode his hobby in a pretty decent ambling pace, and ſmiled. But behold, when we thought the buſineſs quite over and forgotten, he takes us at a ſhort turn, and we find him mounted again.... No offence I hope; yes, by St. Patrick (an Iriſh oath) but there is, and much offence too;

That trot became a gallop ſoon
Which gall'd him in his ſeat.

He

* Johnſon, in reply . . . . " Nay, Sir! if he had been taught by " Sheridan, he would have cleared the room." Vol. i. p. 543. † Ibid.

‡ Sheridan died at Margate in Kent, Auguſt the 16th, 1788. . . . . Boſwell's book did not appear till about three years after, as we may collect from the date of his dedication, April 20th 1791, which was full ſeven years ſubſequent to Sheridan's Life of Swift, firſt publiſhed in 1784.

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He winces, gentle reader! you ſee he winces! do but obſerve his contortions! John Gilpin, ſir! was a ſtoick to him—Softly, ſoftly, good Mr. Boſwell! tho' anxious enough to conceal your chagrin, you veritably take the matter too heinouſly. Vanity and prejudice apart, what might Poſterity ſay to your ſtrictures? they might ſay, here is a ſtrong daſh of prejudice, malevolence, crimination and abuſe. . . . But where is the wit? We have Mr. Boſwell's word for it, and that is concluſive; for what obſerver of leſs conſummate ſagacity could have made the diſcovery? and what ſcholiaſt of leſs conſummate acumen could have conceived, in that ſame luminous ſally, any reference to a work, which was then a nonentity in the archives of literature? What a *loſs to the nation* in theſe perilous times HE was not Prime Miniſter! . . . Serioufly, the laſh, is a ſmart metaphorical conceit, though in our humble apprehenſion ſomewhat awkwardly and ambiguouſly brought in. . . . . The laſh! ay! the laſh of wit; indeed, as one may ſay, a very pretty figure; in very admirable hands, and very cavalierly exerciſed; exerciſed by the ſaid Mr. Boſwell! Does the ſaid Mr. Boſwell apply it as a principal, or merely as a proxy? ſaving his modeſty we rather think the latter; be that as it may, Sheridan, the reprobrated writer of Swift's Life, was not the aggreſſor; and ſuppoſing him amenable, the correction, as before hinted, for we are compelled to reiterate, was inflicted by anticipation. The provocation alledged was not even in embrio. The effect cannot precede its cauſe, and, at the date of the converſation referred to, his employers, the bookſellers, had not even ſuggeſted to Johnſon the expediency of the Lives of the Poets containing his libel upon Swift, which Sheridan in the courſe of his ſubſequent account of his friend and godfather incidentally takes up.

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The occaſion offered; it was not fought.* But what of that, the great ſubject of the memoirs, Mr. Boſwell was then writing, is the momentous conſideration, and at all events muſt be ſupported; it behoved no leſs the wren on the eagle's wing to have an eye to his own ſituation. Under ſuch impreſſions, it is not to be wondered at, that every nice offence of Sheridan's is exaggerated; ſet in a note-book, learned and conned by roſe to caſt into his teeth; while the groſs ſcurrilities of the man who daily enjoyed ſo many hours of needful amuſement under his hoſpitable roof are ſelected for admiration, and exhibited with eclat. Fortunately ours is the age of reaſon; the volume of nature, in legible characters lies open to inſpection, where all men, no doubt equally competent, are readers. Hypotheſes are framed, and to ſhew their proficiency, or haply to eſcape the laſh of wit, every abſurdity has its advocate. . . . Johnſon, and his ſatellite, Boſwell, are arraigned; if any man ſhould cavil at our defence of the illuſtrious pair, we deprecate his cenſure, and plead preſcription and the faſhion of the times.

In the affair under conſideration, though neither the juſtice or candour of the parties be conſpicuous, on the principles of our new philoſophy, the literary deſpot may be cleared of imputation, and the ſuppoſed anachroniſms of his biographer may be reconciled. . . . . Dr. Johnſon paid a viſit to the Highlands, an incident that cannot be indifferent to our brethren of the North; there, as we may well preſume, in the manner of one of our modern illuminati, or more opportunely from his truſty Achates, 'his humble attendant,' as he modeſtly ſtyles himſelf, who was native there, the ſage acquired the myſterious faculty of SECOND SIGHT,

* The diſquiſition concerning Sheridan, vindictively brought forward by Boſwell, he dates Ann. 1769. Johnſon's Critique on the Life and Writings of Swift, in his Account of the Poets, firſt appeared in 1779. . . . . Sheridan's Account of Swift not 'till 1784.——See the Work, p. 449, &c.

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SIGHT,* and looking into the ſeeds of time, ſaw himſelf in a book to be written ſome fifteen or twenty years to come, ycleped 'a writer of gigantic fame.' This, on the inconteſtible authority of a grave hiſtorian, an eye witneſs of the fact, who, as we may well preſume, had no temptation to lying, his patron being dead and unable to pay for it; the hiſtorian himſelf remarkable for the ſame rare faculty of preſcience, and ſo free from any partiality to Johnſon, that he has even been accuſed of drawing him into very unfavourable ſituations, for the important end of ſwelling his Diary;† this characteriſtic expreſſion, 'a writer of gigantic fame,' I ſay on the authority aforeſaid, was an outrageous and unpardonable attack, which it was incumbent on a genius of the ſage's athletic importance to repel. Corporeal notice, as meditated againſt the reprobated tranſlator of Oſſian, might induce unfavourable conſtructions, and be attended with diſagreeable conſequences; poſſibly inconvenient withal.‡ In the inſtant of deliberation things ſuddenly took a new turn; Minerva, in the ſhape of the maſter of Auchenleck, claps my philoſopher on the back, and ſuggeſts a ſure and ſafer expedient, which was, in the faſhionable phraſe of modern heroiſm,§ to reſerve his fire and pay the ſatirical

* SECOND SIGHT. See Boſwell, vol. i. p. 472, vol. ii. pp. 5, 203.

† Some faſtidious commentator, verſed in obſolete lore, fifteen or twenty centuries hence, may be tempted to aſſert, that in this paſſage our author had his eye on that impartial writer David Hume, who in ſuch wiſe characterizes his admired fellow-labourer, Tacitus. The ſame Tacitus who announceth certain native burghers in the German Sea; "many men, many women, and many children," ſuch, as 'twas averred, could write the Poems of Oſſian, that hugely diſmayed the Roman cohorts; He alſo telleth of certain northern tribes wont to hear the hiſſing of the waves when the Sun gets out of bed in a morning, and, on leading his nags from the ſtable, make a leg and wiſh him a good journey!!!!

‡ Boſwell, vol. ii. p. 171. See this hint taken up and ſomewhat elucidated in the Appendix hereto ſubjoined. No. I.

§ Duelling, here alluded to, is a weed of the feudal ages; the ſpurious offspring of chivalry, and utterly unknown in the times when Minerva was in repute.

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ſatirical knave in his own coin. He accedes to the admonition of the goddeſs, and in terrorem leaves in the hands of his ingenious biographer, a ſquib; to be kept in petto till the ſeaſon meet for wreaking his revenge.

On this preſumption, ſo agreeable to reaſon and truth, the affair is naturally accounted for, and the Doctor clearly exculpated; nor can any juſt exception poſſibly lie to the poſition, ſave that in ſome reſpects it impugns the notion of co-partnerſhip, and tends to deſpoil Mr. Boſwell of the prerogative of wit. However to accommodate matters the beſt we can, as the gentleman, it is by this time pretty well underſtood, is no enemy to celebrity at ſecond hand, the laſh, we admit, is of his own manufacture, and without fraud or conteſt decidedly his due; yet ſtill a doubt remains that he never would have thought of it, if Johnſon had not lent him a ſpur.

The wit, a precious Morceau! which ſo forcibly marks his hero's penetration, magnanimity, and liberality of mind, that faithful hiſtorian confeſſes he would have ſuppreſſed, but that Sheridan, naughty man! called him pigmy; and, after ſeven years dreaming on the atrocious ſcroll, like the fretful porcupine, he briſtles up his poiſoned quills againſt the perſon whoſe worth and merit he affects to think of with reſpect, and darts them at his ſhroud. Pity! that in the paroxyſm of his fury he overſhot the mark, and back the deviliſh engine recoils upon himſelf. The hour of attack approaches; he appeals to the high tribunal of the public; his plea is over-ruled; there is a ſmall flaw in the indictment; the action will not lie; culprit did not attack the illuſtrious ſage; the illuſtrious ſage was the aſſailant; Sheridan only traverſed the record and took up the gauntlet for his friend Swift, when his friend's mouth

was

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was ſtopped and could not do juſtice to himſelf. Culprit did not call Mr. Boſwell pigmy; pigmy is not in the ſcroll; the paſſages we have collated, and however ſuitable the term, the adoption of it is his own. Sheridan makes no invidious compariſons: ſingles out no particular object; but in the way of contraſt by corporal alluſion, ſpeaking of the junto, contents himſelf with ſaying "Little Men".... *Qui capit ille facit*... ſure Mr. Boſwell is not a *little* writer; why of all mankind ſhould he take it to himſelf? and why at that particular juncture ſhould it gall him? Now, on the ſubject of Swift, compare Johnſon and Sheridan, and ſay to whom juſtly appertains the epithet outrageous.*

The diſquiſition mentioned took place, if *bona fide* it did take place, in 1769. Sheridan's Life of Swift did not appear till 1784, which was the firſt and only inſtance of his writhing, if writhing Mr. Boſwell will have it; but, from what has been proved, it is pretty plain others were writhing with a vengeance in the interim, and even long antecedent to that period betrayed ſymptoms notoriouſly ſuſpicious. Johnſon, ſtruck the firſt blow, and purſued it with unrelenting acrimony, roufed on every frivolous occaſion, wickedly ſuggeſted, as the text intimates, for the ſpace of thirty years. What were his motives? .... dare we ſay literary envy? Jealouſy of a Brother's Fame? a weakneſs, admitting all his merits, of which that great man ſtands accuſed. Both were engaged in the ſame arduous taſk, though in ſomewhat a different line, the cultivation and improvement of the Engliſh Tongue. Johnſon was not an orator, and had but little intercourſe with the graces; therefore thought ſlightingly

* Boſwell, [Friday March 24, An. 1775] in his uſual way, tells the world "Johnſon was in high ſpirits this evening at the club, and talked with great animation and ſucceſs. He attacked Swift, as he uſed to do upon all occaſions."—Vol. ii. p. 203.—See the ſeveral accounts before adverted to.

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ſlightingly of Sheridan's Art. Sheridan had acquired a high reputation, and was much ſought after, as an adept in the inſtitution of youth; a department in which, however kept a ſecret, Dr. Johnſon had been tried and found wanting.* Nay poſſibly, very poſſibly, for Sheridan was no ſycophant, and had a touch of his own condition, the Good Man might refuſe ſubſcription to the Great Man's dogmatic opinions, and preſuming to think for himſelf, a way he had, diſputed the Doctor's infallibility. Theſe are not inſiſted upon as matters of importance; but it was known Sheridan had in contemplation an ENGLISH DICTIONARY, and the eſtabliſhment of a NATIONAL ACADEMY upon the ſame principle, for which he was at the time ſoliciting patronage. That was an unequivocal avowal, and, in Johnſon's imagination, an encroachment on his dictatorial conſequence, which, connected with the reſt, though they purſued very different routes, rankled in his mind, 'I thank thee, Boſwell! for teaching me that word,' and manifeſtly gave offence; for in the Preface to his Dictionary, ſo early as the year 1755, Johnſon ſteps out of his way, and even makes a temporary ſacrifice of his political principles to have a wipe at Sheridan. Sheridan, more juſt to Johnſon's literary reputation, overlooked the inuendo; cultivated his acquaintance, and had him at his table a conſtant gueſt. In the year 1762, Sheridan's ſcheme for a new Engliſh Dictionary was publiſhed. That memorable year he was nominated for a penſion,† and, no way envious of his friend's celebrity, he ſeized the favourable opportunity; ſuggeſted the propriety of a proviſion for Johnſon, and was the firſt who communicated to him the Royal Intention.§ The return Dr. Johnſon made

* *Found wanting.*—See this topic farther illuſtrated in the Appendix No. 2.
† See Boſwell's Johnſon, vol. i. p. 349 . . . § Ibid. pp. 343, 4.

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made him, and ſome part of Mr. Boſwell's ingenious commentary, we have already ſeen; but for a more explicit detail we refer to the work itſelf.

In the interim, as we are on the ſubject of penſions, it may not be improper to add a few words by way of elucidation, in which we ſhall endeavour to follow our elaborate precurſor, *haud paſſibus æquis*, who, notwithſtanding the mighty pother he makes to perſuade us of the pains he has been at in procuring the moſt authentic teſtimony, has not been altogether exact. He has indeed been minutely circumſtantial in what relates to Dr. Johnſon; in what relates to Sheridan he appears not ſo ſedulouſly inquiſitive. Mr. Sheridan's penſion was granted to him, as that writer correctly ſays, 'not as a player;' nor, as he incorrectly ſtates, 'as a ſufferer in the cauſe of government.' He was in that reſpect at leaſt on a footing with Johnſon. The penſion was granted to Sheridan, without ſolicitation, 'as the reward of his literary merit.'* Beſides, Mr. Boſwell ſhould have recollected, that Sheridan was not only taken by the hand and encouraged to proceed in his Scheme of Education and his Dictionary, by his countryman, the Earl of Bute, who was then Prime Miniſter; but that on the ſame account he was recommended to his Sovereign by the Duke of Northumberland, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whoſe ſon, the brave Earl Percy, was his pupil, and by the powerful connections of the Hon. George Grenville, now Marquis of Buckingham, and his brother, who, under the care of their private Tutor, now an Engliſh Biſhop,† made a viſit to Dublin for the ſole purpoſe

* See Mrs. Sheridan's letters annexed, particularly that dated London, November 29th, 1762. . . See alſo Mr. Boſwell, vol. i. p. 350.

† Few are the tutors in the fiſter kingdom who can boaſt of ſuch comfortable terminations to their pains and ſolicitudes in diſcharge of their laborious and momentous occupation.

of profiting by Sheridan's inſtructions, which in a very eminent degree they confeſſedly did, and during their ſtay there were frequently his gueſts. His Majeſty's Bounty in like manner, about the ſame time, was extended to a Scotch gentleman, I think Dr. Douglas, or the Rev. Mr. Home, author of the Tragedy of that name. Theſe marks of Royal Encouragement to literary merit were not in the intention ſimply confined to the individuals, happily ſelected for the occaſion, on his Majeſty's Acceſſion to the Throne; but on an impartial ſcale to be conſidered as national compliments and earneſts of Sovereign Protection to Genius in the ſeveral kingdoms of which thoſe gentlemen were reſpectively natives; and were not a tax upon the national coffers, as in the caſe of ordinary penſions; but paid out of his Majeſty's privy purſe.——So ends the chapter of penſions.

To return: Sheridan is blamed for perſevering reſentment; we are by no means advocates for perſevering reſentment; but if juſtifiable in any caſe, it ſurely was in the caſe before us. Sheridan's reſentment was an open honeſt indignation, ariſing from a proper ſenſe of injurious treatment; it was ſpirited, not vindictive; it was repulſive, not mean. Was he again to run his head into the lion's mouth? and what was his ſecurity againſt ſavage attacks? His reſentment was a meaſure of ſelf-defence. Mr. Boſwell ſays, he informed Sheridan, that Johnſon would be glad to meet him amicably: on what authority he did ſo inform him does not appear. Where was his commiſſion? There is no note thereof in his Diary, circumſtantial as it is; no trace of any ſuch converſation on the ſubject is to be found; had any thing of the kind taken place it would have been recorded. He would have made a merit of it, and, though it might have been an error in the coſtume, he would have marked it as an amiable trait in the character of his illuſtrious friend. His good intention

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ſhall not be diſputed; but the ſtep was unwarranted, and the conſequence at beſt problematical; there is no playing with edge tools. He acted officiouſly and deſerved, what he was not unaccuſtomed to, a rebuff: It would not have been the firſt in caſes very ſimilar. The affair was Johnſon's; did he ever retract his malicious inſinuations? and what overtures in his own perſon appear towards a reconciliation? was it not rather prohibited by reiterated provocation? Boſwell, kind ſoul! would impute it to an effect of vanity. Dr. Johnſon does not ſimply attack his friend Sheridan's vanity; he ties him to the ſtake; "He feeds fat the ancient grudge he bears him"; he way-lays him; he aſſails him behind his back, and takes illiberal advantage of his abſence to traduce and ſport away *his character*; he attacks him in his profeſſion; he endeavours to ſap the foundation of his hard-earned fame, and to depreciate his juſt claims to public favour; but—"he allows him to be a good man:" that is, he indulges his ſpleen at Sheridan's expence, and "after a pauſe," to give his ſarcaſms their full effect, he bethinks him of a ſalvo. . . . "But Brutus is an honourable man." In his own caſe he might have thought it a ſubdolous evaſion; a forced conceſſion wholly nugatory on the footing of worldly ſucceſs. Goodneſs, as virtue, is its own reward, and ſeldom the ground of competitorſhip. Dr. Johnſon's penſion was not granted him on account of his goodneſs; "*the penſion was granted to Johnſon ſolely as the reward of his literary merit.*" * To what then did his negative compliment amount? The Jew may help Sheridan to an anſwer; his obſervation comes home to the occaſion, though, even Johnſon muſt admit, Sheridan was in no reſpect a Brother of the Tribe.

Nay,

* Lord Loughborough's words . . Boſwell, vol. i. p. 342.

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Nay, take my life and all, pardon not that:
You take my houſe, when you do take the prop
That doth ſuſtain my houſe; you take my life
When you do take the means whereby I live.

Sheridan had a family to provide for; his means were in ſuppoſition, and, we may ſay, altogether depended on his eſtimation with the Public, which the ſtrictures of Johnſon were certainly not calculated to improve. Mr. Sheridan had great energy of mind; he was an enthuſiaſt in the cauſe of Education; it was the favourite ſtudy of his life, and all his exertions ultimately tended to that one great object: ſo cloſely was it interwoven in his heart, that I have heard him in converſation on the ſubject declare to my Father, and I believe he was ſincere in the declaration, however paradoxical it may ſeem, that he would rather ſee his two ſons at the head of reſpectable Academies, as a ſituation the moſt beneficial to mankind, than one of them Prime Miniſter of Britain, and the other at the head of affairs in Ireland *. He might be over ſanguine in his projects, and, on that head it muſt be confeſſed, ſomewhat ſingular in his notions; yet they did not ſpring from the littleneſs of a ſelfiſh ambition; but were founded on the broad baſis of public good: they might not, in vulgar acceptation, be very ſplendid or ſublime; they might not exactly ſquare with the politics of his children; but they were not, for that ſeaſon, criminal; and to ſay nothing of ingratitude, was it the part of a friend ſo looked up to, ſo converſant in matters of juvenile inſtitution as Johnſon was ſuppoſed to be, to thwart his benevolent Hoſt's generous ſtruggles for independence? to treat him, whom

* The eldeſt, Charles-Francis, was at that time Secretary at War and Member of the Houſe of Commons in Ireland; and the youngeſt, Richard-Brinſley, Repreſentative for Stafford in England.

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whom he allowed to be a good man, with deriſion, and to hold him up as an object for Scorn to point her ſlow and moving finger at? The figure is ſtrong, and ſome may think the outline overcharged; but in ſuch caſes we are not to be guided merely by our own feelings; we are to have an eye to the conception and feelings of the character more immediately affected. What to one man is but matter of amuſement, may be to another death. Boſwell, in his Chronicle from the year 1762 to the year 1784 incluſive, no leſs than thirteen times introduces Mr. Sheridan, and every time for the ſole purpoſe, it would ſeem, of abuſing him; for almoſt in every inſtance, either directly, or by obvious implication, he is the Butt of reprehenſion, and his character epiſodically brought in as the vehicle of ſome illiberal reflection.

The *active* part he took in promoting Johnſon to a penſion is not abſolutely denied; but in the manner of relating Boſwell does all that in him lies to obſcure the merit of it, and ſolicitouſly compliments all his friends with having a hand in it, even ſome who never pretended a claim,* to raviſh the Honour from Sheridan. It reſts on the conceſſion of Lord Loughborough, though, according to the report, grudgingly obtained, and certainly void of that ingenuous openneſs and manly liberality which might be expected from a perſon of his Lordſhip's exalted ſtation and character. And, to borrow a favourite phraſe of Boſwell's, 'It is but juſt to add,' that the part Johnſon acted on the occaſion was affectedly ſcrupulous; ſhilly, ſhally; he would and he would not; more in the ſtyle of a wayward, ſqueamiſh, young

* It has been aſſerted on reſpectable authority, that Mr. Murphy never aſſumed to himſelf the diſtinction of being the prime mover, as alledged, in the buſineſs of the penſion to Johnſon.

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young ſpinſter on the point of preferment, than a dignified ſage..... Mr. Boſwell tells us "the Earl of Bute, then Prime Miniſter, had the honour to announce this inſtance of his Sovereign's bounty." * Two or three pages farther on, "Sheridan communicated to Johnſon that a penſion was granted to him," and from the great penſioner's remarkable and pointed reply, it is as clear as the cleareſt propoſition in Euclid, this was the firſt time the welcome tidings reached his ears. † A venial ſlip of Mr. Boſwell's; perhaps intentional, to ſupport a diſputed title, on the principle of a well known proverb, great wits have ſhort memories. An apology the more requiſite as this ſeems not the only ſlip of the kind. In the ſame page (as we have ſeen him) confeſſing his chagrin, at an affair which happened two and twenty years after, and relapſing into a ſmile, when the evil ſpirit had departed from him, he repreſents his very kind friend as the life and ſoul of ſociety; for, as he ſays, "Sheridan's well-informed, animated and buſtling mind never ſuffered converſation to ſtagnate." Some few pages afterwards he adopts a quite contrary ſentiment, and with a viſible kind of glee repreſents him as little better than a driveller—"Why Sherry is dull; naturally dull.... ſuch an exceſs "of ſtupidity is not in nature." But this was the reſponſe of his Oracle, and, we may ſuppoſe, like the oracles of old, verbal quirks and ſubterfuges never wanting to evade the charge of contradiction. The diſabilities of Sheridan, 'who no revenue had but his good ſpirits to feed and clothe him,' are heavily laid, and roundly aſſerted. If juſt, it could not be for the agreeable amuſement of his company or converſation that Johnſon ſo conſtantly frequented his table. And if unfounded, what becomes of his vaunted attachment to truth? In the common accidents of life there are no great temptations to its violation,

* See Boſwell, vol. i. p. 341. † Ibid p. 344.

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violation, and, when a character is obtained, it ſerves excellently as a ſtalking horſe; if it anſwered his purpoſe, well; but in the preſent inſtance among others it may be ſeen, that when calumny and detraction was the theme he could let looſe the rein, and without ceremony tread down the fences.* On his rupture with Sheridan, to bring him into company where he *was not* might be an expedient to collect parties for his lonely evenings, and, no doubt, ſet the table in a roar. His Biographer, a conſtant attendant, we may alſo perceive, had the knack of playing into his hand; and it muſt be allowed, was a ſtrenuous croupier.† In brief, for to trace him through all his doublings and eccentricities would be an Herculean taſk, not an incident recorded to Sheridan's

* Dr. Johnſon was fond of arguing for victory, and would eſpouſe either ſide of the queſtion, right or wrong, to foil his adverſary; a practice hardly to be juſtified on moral principles, and often repugnant to the intereſts of truth; a contrary conduct might have been leſs entertaining and not ſo favourable to the ſplendor of talents;

But of the two, leſs dangerous is the offence
To tire our patience than miſlead our ſenſe. POPE.

A practice that trenches on the laws of ſincerity is hardly compatible with an inviolable regard to truth; arguing for arguing's ſake is children's play, ſquabbling for the love of noiſe: arguing for victory has a more dangerous aſpect; 'tis like going to war for the ſake of killing; a curious way of proving a humane and peaceable diſpoſition. A mode of jeſting ſo like earneſt, may lead to very ſerious miſtakes, and tho' the jeſt be diſcovered, the impreſſion indelibly remains. Dr. Johnſon, it muſt be allowed, was a great light, a ſhining light, but like other ſhining lights, if implicitly followed, may prove an *ignis fatuus*, and, ſouce! you go into a ditch.

† Croupier [croopeer] of which I know not the etymology. A word current in Ireland (on that account perhaps, omitted by Johnſon) a name of office among the bon vivants at the feſtivals of Bacchus, given to the perſon ſeated at the oppoſite end of the table to aſſiſt the toaſt-maſter. His duty is to circulate the bottle, and ſee that the gentlemen of his *ſquad* do juſtice to the toaſt.——Bailey has a word very near akin.... Croúper [at a gaming-houſe] accented on the firſt ſyllable, One who watches the cards and gathers money for the bank or ſtake-tray. It is ſaid to have been the occupation of a diſtinguiſhed Commoner, and not beneath the acceptance of a Right Honourable. But in ſcandalous chronicle it no where appears our Biographer flouriſhed in that department.

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Sheridan's advantage, but is guarded with ſome cautionary reſtriction and coupled with clauſes of abatement; ſome invidious glance at his perſon, his talents, his mode of life, or profeſſion; the adoption of which 'tis well known Sheridan himſelf often lamented as matter of neceſſity not wantonly of choice; and, far from meaning a reproach, it is but juſtice to add, that to the ſame unrelenting Taſk-Miſtreſs, Neceſſity, the world is indebted for the labours of Johnſon, which drew forth thoſe volumes of his life, in which irreconcileable enmity appears the leading feature of his conduct towards his old friend, Sheridan, throughout.

If there be an exception, it is a paragraph in the 3d volume, inſerted as part of a deſultory converſation ſaid to have taken place in the year 1779, in which Sheridan's character, as a man of merit, is favourably exhibited; nevertheleſs, even there, a ſmatch of the old leven is perceivable. The ſubject is introduced without any apparent connection, and a compliment to him ſeemingly intended; but the eſſence of it is done away, being connected with circumſtances of dubious complexion, and founded on a Fact for which there is no authority. Boſwell or Johnſon, *Latet anguis in herba.* Let the impartial reader determine; the documents, though not numerous, are ſufficient. From an attention to which alſo, it muſt evidently follow that Mr. Boſwell's claims to ſcrupulous authenticity, at leaſt in this inſtance, are not unexceptionably founded. The originals might have been examined, without running half over London; and perſonal information was always at hand.

Boſwell, ſpeaking of Johnſon, ſays—— "He obſerved his "old friend, Mr. Sheridan, had been honoured with extra- "ordinary attention in his own country, by having had an ex- "ception made in his favour in an Iriſh Act of Parliament "concerning Inſolvent Debtors. Thus to be ſingled out," ſaid

ſaid he, " by a Legiſlature, as an object of public conſidera-
" tion and kindneſs, is a proof of no common merit."* [p. 171.]

Not to indulge a captious diſpoſition, at the firſt bluſh this paragraph betrays ſomething of a contradiction; for even on the high authority alledged Johnſon's unqualified admiſſion of his old friend's uncommon merit is ſcarcely reconcileable to that exceſs of ſtupidity denounced, as noticed a page or two before, in his oracular capacity. However, taken naked as it ſtands, the eulogium is ſpeciouſly advanced, and on ſlight grounds we ſhould not deny him the credit of it; involved with other circumſtances, as previouſly obſerved, it has ſomething in it of an equivocal nature, and comparing

 it

* This affair is erroneouſly taken up in the ſame light by Davies in his Life of Garrick. Boſwell often ſpeaks of Davies as a learned and ingenious Writer for whom Dr. Johnſon had a particular kindneſs, by whoſe advice and encouragement he undertook that pleaſing monument to the memory of our Engliſh Roſcius. But though it is not wholly free from partiality, natural enough in a Biographer, to his Hero, he has not raiſed a magnificent coloſſus to him on the broken ſtatues of his cotemporaries; when the ſubject leads him to mention Mr. Sheridan, his great maſter's competitor and rival, he ſpeaks with ingenuous freedom, and not for the invidious purpoſe of dragging him into ludicrous notice. The following is the paragraph particularly alluded to, which will bring the Reader more intimately acquainted with Mr. Sheridan's true character, and in ſome meaſure counteract the poiſon of Boſwell.

" This gentleman [Mr. Sheridan] had been long eſteemed a man of eminence in his profeſſion, and notwithſtanding Mr. Garrick's great reputation for acting, ſome critics did not ſcruple to compare, nay, prefer Sheridan's performance of certain capital characters, ſuch as Macbeth, Hamlet, &c. to the other's utmoſt efforts in thoſe parts."

" But indeed the Manager's own jealouſy juſtified the public good opinion of Mr. Sheridan's ability; though certainly there was a wide difference between their ſeveral pretenſions; neither in perſon or voice had nature been very kind to the latter. But his judgment, his learning, and

it with the general tenour of his aſſertions, a doubt ariſes whether it was ſeriouſly or ironically intended. As the matter ſtands wholly inſulated, there is no forming any judgment from the context; but it comes in a queſtionable ſhape, and muſt reſt ſolely on its own intrinſic merits. In that light it is unluckily featured, and bears confutation on the face of it. If inſolvent acts were calculated generally for the puniſhment, not relief, of unfortunate defaulters, the ſtory of a clauſe of exception in favour of an individual might carry weight; but Johnſon was too converſant in parliamentary uſage to be impoſed on, which makes it difficult to conceive, if the diſcourſe be fairly ſtated, that he meant it ſeriouſly. "Somebody, to rouſe Johnſon, might wickedly "have ſaid it," and that was his method of retorting. He always diſputed Sheridan's merits, for which no doubt he had his reaſons, and on a ſuppoſition that he thought it merely a ſpeculation of his old friend's partizans, a report fabricated

and cloſe application to ſtudy, compenſated in ſome degree for the want of external advantages. His manner, though certainly not very pleaſing, was ſuppoſed to be his own, and not borrowed from an imitation of others. He had beſides the advantage of an excellent character in private life. *Sheridan had the peculiar honour, when abſent from Ireland, to be diſtinguiſhed by the legiſlature of his country, as a man whoſe particular intereſt was worthy of their care and attention.* . . . Mr. Garrick ſoon found that his engagement with this actor was of very great advantage to him. Little difference in the bulk of audiences was to be perceived when they acted ſeparately the parts of Hamlet and Richard, or any other capital characters. The Manager himſelf owned that, except Barry, he had never found ſo able an aſſiſtant; for the beſt of them he ſaid, would not draw together a hundred pound audience; but Garrick's ruling paſſion was the love of fame, and his uneaſineſs ariſing from the ſucceſs of Sheridan began every day to be more and more viſible," which we find, by Mr. Davies's Account, terminated in a total ſeparation not much to the honour or advantage of the Manager.

Davies's Life of Garrick, vol. i. pp. 300, 1. London printed 1784, 2 vols 4th edit. the firſt edition bears date April 22, 1780.

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fabricated to enhance his character, the ſarcaſm comes pointed with double force. No Gentleman of information, particularly from Ireland, could conſider it as complimentary; for, improbabilities apart, it reſts upon a Fact to which, had any ſuch exiſted, they could not be ſtrangers. It muſt have been an affair of public notoriety, open to inſpection; but in truth no ſuch exception is on record. The particular Act alluded to, and the Journals of the Houſe of Commons, printed by authority, are now under conſultation, and no veſtiges of any ſuch exception are to be met with in either. Whatever gave birth to it, the ſtory as related is fictitious, and can do no honour to the memory of Mr. Sheridan in the eſtimation of any intelligent perſon who really reſpected him. His merit ſtood in no need of meretricious varniſh or adventitious ſupport; the Public were in full poſſeſſion of it; but the kindneſs he experienced was the kindneſs of private friendſhip. The effort of One who ſeldom let an opportunity of ſerving thoſe for whom he profeſſed a friendſhip eſcape him. The ſubject has been already touched upon,* which as a literary anecdote a few incontrovertible facts will more ſatisfactorily elucidate; they are extracted from my Father's papers, and are faithful to the Original.

JOURNALS of the HOUSE of COMMONS, Vol. xiv. Martis, 11 die Martii, 1766. } Page 207 †

"A Petition of *Samuel Whyte* and other principal Creditors of Thomas Sheridan, Eſq. was preſented to the Houſe and read; ſetting forth, that the ſaid Thomas Sheridan, late Manager of the Theatre in Smock-alley, having contracted ſeveral debts which he was unable to anſwer, was obliged to quit the kingdom, from the perſecution of ſome of his Creditors, who

* See WHYTE'S POEMS: Notes and Illuſtrations, p. 297.

† In the edit. of 1771.... in a ſubſequent Edition, viz. in that of 1782, page 229, where Petitioner's name is inaccurately ſpelled, *Whitt*.

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who refuſed to ſign a Letter of Licence, by which he is cut off from every proſpect of paying his debts, or providing for his family. And praying, that the ſaid Thomas Sheridan may have ſuch protection and relief as to the Houſe ſhall ſeem meet."

"Ordered, that the ſaid Petition be referred to the ſaid Committee."

This was entirely a voluntary meaſure of the Petitioner, without the participation or even knowlege of Mr. Sheridan, who, for the reaſons ſet forth in the Petition, had retired with his family to Blois in France. The ſituation of his affairs, though greatly deranged, had not deprived him of every reſource; he had ſtill a Friend, who, not unconſcious of the difficulties in his way, entertained hopes of finding, one day or other, the means of reſtoring him to his country. At length an opportunity ſeemed to preſent itſelf. A Bill was brought into Parliament for the Relief of Inſolvent Debtors under certain limitations. Petitions poured into the Houſe from every quarter; but Mr. Sheridan's abſence, at ſo remote a diſtance, rendered it impoſſible, had he been ever ſo much inclined, to take advantage of the occaſion. The Bill was ſome time pending, and Petitioner, who had preconcerted his plan, waited its progreſs with ſilent expectation; for he knew Mr. Sheridan, in conſequence of his critical ſituation, had many enemies, and ſome very indiſcreet friends, whoſe officiouſneſs might prove as detrimental as the machinations of his adverſaries; both of which were to be guarded againſt; he therefore, for fear of accidents, kept cloſe his intentions, and poſtponed his application to the laſt hour, that thoſe whom he ſuſpected inimical might not have time to unite their forces and make head againſt him. Tueſday, March 11, was the day fixed for the final Reſolution of the Houſe.

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Houſe. On the Sunday morning preceding, Petitioner went to Bellingham Boyle, Eſq; of Rathfarnham Caſtle, whoſe kind partiality he had long experienced, and for the firſt time opened his deſign. Mr. Boyle liſtened to it with his accuſtomed cordiality, and very much applauded the intention, but did not flatter him with great expectation of ſucceſs; for he imagined it would meet with a powerful oppoſition, and the time was too ſhort to ſecure a party to carry it through. Petitioner earneſtly remonſtrated, and explained his motives for the delay, which Mr. Boyle, upon conſideration, thinking feaſible, he propoſed to conſult Mr. Tiſdall [the Attorney General] and a few more of the leading Members, to whom Petitioner was well known, and promiſed, as *ſoon* as poſſible, to apprize him of the reſult. The ſucceeding evening, at a very late hour, he was ſummoned to attend at the Chambers of Mr. Fitzgerald, Judge of the Admiralty, where he found the Attorney General, the Provoſt, Mr. Boyle, and ſix or ſeven Members more, in conſultation. Having ſatisfied them in ſome points touching the buſineſs in queſtion, they gave him inſtructions to prepare a Petition to be preſented to the Houſe early the next day, and, as they had no doubt Mr. Sheridan had many well-wiſhers among his Creditors, directed him to get it ſigned by as many of them as he could, which, ſeeing the buſineſs in train, and his example, a joint and equal ſufferer, before them, it was ſuppoſed none of them would refuſe.

Here indeed he met with the moſt mortifying diſappointments; for, though all thoſe he judged it prudent to confide in, declared themſelves ſatisfied of Mr. Sheridan's probity and good intentions, and acknowleged, without reſerve, that the particulars were fairly and honeſtly ſtated, he could not

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not procure a ſingle name in addition to his own to countenance the application. George Faulkner, whom he looked upon as his ſheet anchor, was the firſt that excuſed himſelf.† The morning being waſted in fruitleſs ſolicitations, no time was to be loſt; the Petition, in its original conception, which was merely a rough draft haſtily made out, and crude as it obviouſly muſt be, was delivered to Mr. Boyle, who, though a ſtrenuous and active colleague, was no ſpeaker, and he committed it to Mr. Fitzgerald. That Gentleman, in a very happily-conceived ſpeech, recommended it to the Houſe; the celebrated Charles Lucas, M. D. Repreſentative for Dublin, Petitioner's moſt intimate Friend, ſeconded the motion, which was warmly ſupported by Mr. Adderley. . . . . It paſſed unanimouſly . . . . The Petitioner to attend the Committee on Thurſday the laſt of their ſitting.

JOHN MONCK MASON, Eſq. in the Chair.

The late Lord Viſcount Doneraile, and the preſent Lord Viſcount Northland, his earlieſt and moſt ſteady patrons, then in the Commons, received him at the door, and taking him by the hand announced him to the Committee, ſaying, "Here comes the worthy Petitioner for Mr. Sheridan." This was an encouraging reception, and the prelude to a more ſignal inſtance of favour in the ſequel. Standing at the foot of the table, the Book, as is the uſage, was handed to him; but the teſt of an Affidavit was diſpenſed with.

Mr. Tottenham immediately roſe, and addreſſing the Chair, expatiated at ſome length on the purport of the Petition before them, and the extraordinary circumſtance of its introduction to the Houſe. A Creditor petitioning the Legiſlature in behalf of his Debtor, he obſerved, was very much out of the uſual courſe, and the ſingle inſtance of the kind, he

† Something more of this Gentleman in a ſubſequent page.

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he believed, that ever ſolicited the attention of Parliament. Among other encomiums, of which he was by no means ſparing, he ſaid, it was a ſpirited and laudable exertion of friendſhip, evidently proceeding from a diſintereſted principle, and in his opinion merited particular conſideration and reſpect; adding, "*I therefore move you, that Petitioner ſhall not be put to his* OATH; *but the Facts ſet forth in his Petition be admitted ſimply on his* WORD." His motion was ſeconded by an inſtantaneous, Ay! Ay! without a diſſenting voice. A few queſtions were then put, purely as it were for form's ſake, and Petitioner was diſmiſſed with repeated teſtimonies of applauſe and congratulations of ſucceſs.

The Creditors, moſt likely, either did not wiſh or imagine he would carry *his point*; for when they found the buſineſs effected, they appeared in a combination to abuſe him; and not only reproached him for meddling, as they called it, but affected to look upon him as reſponſible to them for the whole of their reſpective demands; becauſe, as they alledged, he had without their concurrence had recourſe to Parliament to their prejudice, and deprived them of the means of proſecuting their juſt claims. Some of them actually conſulted counſel, and took ſteps for the purpoſe of compelling him to pay them out of his own pocket. The idea may be now laughed at; but the thing was very ſeriouſly menaced: and in his ſituation, unhackneyed as he was in the ways of men;* of a profeſſion too of all others the moſt expoſed to anxiety and trouble, with at beſt very inadequate compenſation, it muſt have been an accumulated grievance, and their vindictive malice not a little alarming.

Mr. Sheridan's ſubſequent letters on the ſubject, now in the Editor's hands, at the ſame time that they more clearly explain

* He was of a retired habit; juſt turned of thirty, and ſcarcely eight years converſant in buſineſs.

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explain and corroborate the facts, remain a deciſive teſtimony of his principles, and reflect a genuine luſtre on his character as a Huſband, a Father, a moral Man, and a Chriſtian.

To Mr. Samuel Whyte, Maſter of the Engliſh Grammar-School, in Grafton-ſtreet, Dublin. Via Londres, Angleterre.

DEAR SAM!

YOUR long-expected letter has at length arrived without date. You mention in it that it was writ the poſt after Mr. Sheen's, but by ſome ſtrange fatality it has been ſix weeks longer in its paſſage. I own your long ſilence aſtoniſhed me, and raiſed in me many mortifying reflections. The general neglect which I experienced from all quarters in my diſtreſt ſituation, created in me ſuch an apathy for all the affairs of this life, that I was almoſt brought to wiſh to paſs the reſt of my days

Oblituſque meorum obliviſcendus et illis.

But your laſt has ſhewn me that friendſhip is not wholly baniſhed from the earth. I find that it is to your care ſolely I am indebted for the turn my affairs have taken, and it pleaſed me the more, as you are the only perſon living to whom I would wiſh to owe ſuch an obligation. Your ſilence during the tranſaction carries its excuſe with it. It was better on every account that the attempt ſhould be made without my privity. And to deal ingenuouſly with you, had you conſulted me, I ſhould never have conſented to it. But as the thing has paſſed with ſo much credit to me, the whole honour and merit of it is yours. What I mentioned in a former, relative to an act of Parliament, had no reference to any ſuch act to be made in Ireland, of which I had not the leaſt idea; but to an Engliſh act paſſed the ſeſſions before for the relief of inſolvent debtors, with the nature of

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of which I desired to be made acquainted. . . . . You have not made me acquainted with the circumstances of the act, in which, through your friendly and disinterested exertions, I am concerned; nor mentioned the time that it will be proper for me to go to Ireland. I should be glad you would take the first opportunity of conveying a copy of the act to Mr. Chamberlaine, because there are some points on which I would take advice in London, before my setting out for Dublin. And now, my dear SAM!. I must tell you, that without your farther assistance it will be impossible for me to reap the benefit of what you have done for me. From the perpetual fluctuation in the ministry, the payments are no longer punctual at the Treasury. There is now due to me a year of my pension; and at the moment I am writing to you I am reduced to my last Louis. I had relied upon receiving about fifty pound from Sheen, for the books and a year's rent of a certain farm at Quilca. But this I find, without any notice given me, has been forestalled, and Sheen writes me word that he has not a shilling to spare. I had before applied to some friends in England, who had made large professions to me; but I find, by an obstinate silence on their part, that nothing is to be expected from them. My sole reliance at present is upon you; nor should I have the least doubt on me, if your abilities were equal to your good will. But I must conjure you by all that is sacred in friendship to raise a hundred pounds for me, as speedily as you can, and convey it to William Whately, Esq; Banker in London, for my use; on the receipt of which I will immediately set out for England in my way to Dublin. Mrs. Sheridan and the Children will continue in France, 'till my affairs are settled; and after that you may rely upon it that this is the first debt I shall think myself bound to discharge. I need not

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ſay more upon this head; I am ſure your utmoſt endeavours will not be wanting to ſerve me in this exigence, and to complete what you have ſo well begun.

And now I muſt give you ſome account of what we have been doing ſince our arrival at Blois. I have long ſince finiſhed the Dictionary, and have got together the greateſt part of the materials for the Grammar, which only want being reduced into order. I have likewiſe almoſt finiſhed a volume of Dialogues on the Engliſh Language, to ſerve as a preparative for the other work. The more I reflect on the general uſe which muſt be made of this work wherever Engliſh is taught, the more I am convinced that the profits of it will be conſiderable; and that if I keep the right of the Copy to myſelf (which is my deſign) it will be an eſtate to my family. I have finiſhed a Grammar too in Engliſh and French, for the uſe of all foreigners who underſtand French, that are deſirous of attaining a knowledge of the Engliſh tongue by an eaſy and ſhort method. I have alſo drawn up a Grammar in Engliſh to facilitate the attainment of the French tongue to all who ſpeak Engliſh; a work much wanted, and which I began at firſt for the uſe of my children, upon finding the great imperfection of all hitherto publiſhed with that view. Mrs. Sheridan has writ a comedy called a Trip to Bath, in which ſome good judges in England find a great deal of merit. She has alſo made two additional volumes to the Memoirs of Sidney, and has begun a Tragedy in proſe upon part of the ſtory contained in this latter part. Thus you ſee, that, together with the time employed in the inſtruction of the children, we have not been idle ſince our arrival here. Our coming to Blois has been attended with the happy circumſtance of reſtoring Mrs. Sheridan to a perfect good ſtate of health, a bleſſing which ſhe had not known for

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for ten years before; and this alone would make me think it a fortunate event which drove us hither. But I have other reaſons to bleſs this event. It has afforded me an opportunity of acquiring two of the moſt uſeful kinds of knowledge, which one can be poſſeſſed of in this life; I mean a knowledge of the world, and a knowledge of myſelf. To know the world well, one muſt ceaſe to be an actor in the buſy ſcene of life, and be contented to be an humble ſpectator; and to know one's ſelf well, long uninterrupted leiſure for ſelf-examination, at a diſtance from the turbulence and ſeductions of the world, is eſſentially neceſſary. The reſult of my reflections with regard to the world has been the ſame with that of the wiſe man, that it is, Vanity of Vanities. But I have not like him ended my enquiries there. My mind could never reſt in ſo diſpiriting a concluſion; it naturally led me to the conſideration of another life, where all that is amiſs here will be rectified. And after the moſt unprejudiced enquiries, I remained in the full conviction, that it is from RELIGION alone that we can hope for contentment in this life, or happineſs in a future one: and the reſult of my ſelf-examination was, a determined reſolution to make her ſacred dictates the guide of all my future actions. Don't think, SAM! that either ſuperſtition or melancholy have had the leaſt influence on this occaſion, for I have not a grain of either in my compoſition; it has been the effect of a long, cool, deliberate train of reflection.

I am ſorry I was not before made acquainted with the very kind part which Mr. Boyle took in my affairs. I fear a letter, after ſo great a diſtance of time, would appear with but an ill grace: I muſt therefore beg you will take it upon yourſelf to make him my moſt grateful acknowledgments, and at the ſame time the apology for my ſilence. You do not ſay a word about Mrs. Whyte, nor your Boy. Do you think

think we are indifferent with regard to what concerns you? Aſſure Mr. and Mrs. Guinneſs of my warmeſt regards and beſt wiſhes. I did intend to return a few lines in anſwer to the obliging ones which ſhe added to yours, but you ſee the paper is finiſhed. I am ever ſincerely

and affectionately yours,

Blois, Auguſt 1ſt, 1766. THOMAS SHERIDAN.

This letter affords indubitable proof of the Writer's great reliance on his Friend; and the following will equally evince his Friend was no temporizer; and that his attention to Mr. Sheridan, or his alacrity to ſerve him, neither diſtance of ſituation, nor change of circumſtances, abated.

TO MR. SAMUEL WHYTE, IN GRAFTON-STREET, DUBLIN.

SIR, *London, 13th Auguſt*, 1766.

I HAVE received your favour of the 9th, with a Bill on Meſſrs. Ker and co. for £25. . . which ſhall be paſſed to the account of Mr. Sheridan as deſired. I am, for Meſſrs. Caſtells, and myſelf,

Sir, your moſt humble ſervant,

WILLIAM WHATELY.

SIR, *London, 17th September*, 1766.

I HAVE received your favour of the 11th, with a Bill on Mr. Clarke for £75. . . which ſhall be placed to the account of Mr. Thomas Sheridan. I am, for Meſſrs. Caſtells, and myſelf,

Sir, your moſt humble ſervant,

Aug. 9th. Rem. 25 : 0 : 0 WILLIAM WHATELY.

Sep. 11th. do. . 75 : 0 : 0

Total £100 : 0 : 0 *Brit. Curr.*

To

To Mr. Samuel Whyte, Maſter of the Engliſh Grammar-School, in Grafton-ſtreet, Dublin. Via Londres, Angleterre.

Paris, October 13th, 1766.

OFTEN have I ſat down to write to you an account of the moſt fatal event that could befall me in this life, and as often have thrown aſide the pen. Oh, my dear SAM! the moſt excellent of women is no more. Her apparent malady was an intermitting fever, attended with no one bad ſymptom, 'till the day before her death, when ſhe was ſuddenly deprived of her ſenſes, and all the fatal prognoſticks of a ſpeedy diſſolution appeared. She died the death of the righteous, without one pang, without a groan. The extraordinary circumſtances attending her caſe made me reſolve to have her opened: when it was found that the whole art of medicine could not have prolonged her days, as all the noble parts were attacked, and any one of four internal maladies muſt have proved mortal. If the news of this event has not yet reached Dublin, break it to my Siſter as gently as you can. I ſet out from this in a few days for St. Quintin, a town about half way between this and Calais, where I purpoſe to leave my Children, in the hands of Proteſtants, to whom they are ſtrongly recommended. As ſoon as I have ſettled them, I ſhall ſet out for London, and thence proceed to Dublin as ſpeedily as poſſible. I thank you for your laſt letter and the remittance, without which I ſhould not have been able to have made this arrangement.—SAM! you have loſt a Friend who valued you much. I have loſt what the world cannot repair, a boſom Friend, another ſelf. My children have loſt—Oh their Loſs is neither to be expreſſed nor repaired. But the will of God be done.

I am ever ſincerely
and affectionately yours,

THOMAS SHERIDAN.

It

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It is a juſt remark of Dr. Johnſon's, that "many things which are falſe are tranſmitted from book to book and gain credit in the world," an obſervation which comes home to the experience of moſt intelligent readers, and has been abundantly verified in the caſe of Mr. Sheridan. The preceding facts ſpeak for themſelves, and the documents will hardly be diſputed. In a former page of this volume, it is ſaid, that he died at Margate, Thurſday, Auguſt the 16th.* This is an error of the preſs, it ſhould be Thurſday, Auguſt the 14th, 1788. He had performed a long and difficult part in the eye of the Public, and his final exit was not unnoticed. Memoirs of the late Thomas Sheridan, Eſq; appeared in the European Magazine for the months of September,† October,† November,† and December,† ſubſequent; ſtating in the firſt inſtance, according to cuſtom, the ſuppoſed particulars of his birth and parentage, as follows:

"Thomas Sheridan was the eldeſt ſon of Dr. Thomas "Sheridan, an eminent divine and ſchoolmaſter, but more "celebrated as the friend and companion of Dean Swift, by "Miſs Macpherſon, daughter of a Scots gentleman. He "was born at Quilca, a place which to future times will "acquire a degree of importance, as the reſidence of Swift, "and the birth-place of moſt of Mr. Sheridan's family; par-"ticularly the author of the School for Scandal.‡"—And in a prior publication, containing Memoirs of Richard-Brinſley Sheridan, that gentleman is deſcribed as "the eldeſt ſon of "Thomas Sheridan and Frances his wife, born at Quilca "near Dublin."

Theſe memoirs were republiſhed verbatim in different places, particularly in the Edinburgh and Dublin Magazines; the

* WHYTE'S POEMS, p. 298.——† Eur. Mag. pp. 210, 274, 325, 408.

‡ See alſo Biographia Dramatica, article Sheridan.

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the latter by Pat. Byrne, bookſeller, Grafton-ſtreet. . . . . It muſt be preſumed that the Compiler proceeded on the beſt information he could collect; but his information was not authentic. Mrs. Knowles, Mr. Sheridan's youngeſt and only ſurviving Siſter, who at the time preſided over an eminent Boarding-School for young Ladies in York-ſtreet, was conſulted as to the facts, and her account, which cannot be controverted, ran widely different.

Thomas Sheridan was not the firſt-born of their Parents; her brother Richard being upwards of three years his ſenior, whoſe eldeſt Son of the ſame name, late a King's Counſel, and Member for Charlemont, was preſent at the relation. The name of the Doctor's firſt-born ſon was James, who died young and was buried in St. Mary's Church-yard, Auguſt 22d, 1724, as appears by the Regiſter; conſequently Thomas was his third ſon. Neither was their Mother's maiden name Macpherſon, nor was ſhe of Scotch extraction. Her name was Elizabeth Macfadden, the only child of an Iriſh gentleman of the Province of Ulſter. Mrs. Knowles could not ſee the propriety of diſtinguiſhing Quilca as the ſettled reſidence of Swift, more than Sir Arthur Acheſon's, Mr. Matthews's, Mr. Hamilton's, or any other place where he might have been an invited gueſt, or for a few months occaſionally accommodated: and ſetting down Quilca as the birth-place of her brother Thomas, or any of his family, was void of all foundation; for her Mother and Siſter were remarkably timid on thoſe occaſions, and invariably fixed on the Capital, where they were in the way of more immediate and better aſſiſtance than could be expected in the country. Her brother Thomas, as well as herſelf, and the reſt of the Doctor's children, were born in Capel-ſtreet, in King James's mint-

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mint-houſe, as it was called, where her Father held his ſchool;* and her brother Tom's third ſon, Richard-Brinſley, author of the School for Scandal, was born at his Father's houſe in Dorſet-ſtreet, Dublin, where his eldeſt ſon Thomas, who died in childhood, Charles-Francis, and his eldeſt daughter, were alſo born; and all his children, except the youngeſt daughter, who was born in Henrietta-ſtreet, Covent Garden, London, were baptized in St. Mary's Church, where likewiſe the Doctor her Father's children all received their Baptiſm. This account is confirmed by the Regiſter, to be ſeen in the Church books of St. Mary's, Dublin,† which could not well have been the caſe had they been born at Quilca; a journey of about fifty Engliſh miles from Dublin, and not, as aſſerted, in the neighbourhood of that Metropolis.

Without entering into other matters, there are ſome things to be corrected in the ſtory told of George Faulkner, of oſtentatious memory, which but ill ſquares with his conduct on a former occaſion mentioned, and ſeems more calculated for eclat, than conſiſtent with the Fact.‡ His relinquiſhing his ſecurities, were it really the caſe, two years after the power of enforcing them had been ſuperſeded, was but an empty compenſation for refuſing his Name when it might have been of uſe; but the Alderman knew Printers, and Printers knew him. The paragraph told prettily, and he obtained the Feather. *Quieſcant mortui!* ... The buſineſs was done without him.‖ Mr.

* See an account of the former and preſent ſtate of this ancient Edifice after the Table of Contents. WHYTE'S POEMS, p. viii. ... A plate of which is given, as a Tail-piece, at the end of the firſt poem called the Theatre, or Mirrour for Youth addicted to the Theatro-Mania.

† Extract from the Regiſter of St. Mary's Pariſh, Dublin. Charles-Francis, ſon of Thomas and Frances Sheridan, baptized July 23d, 1750——Richard-Brinſley, ſon of Mr. and Mrs. Sheridan, baptized November 4th, 1751.

‡ See a ſpecimen of this worthy Alderman's kindneſs, page 30, line 2.

‖ The paragraph alluded to, which was omitted in the former Edition, is added in a ſubſequent page, with a few curſory remarks, of which ſome of our readers ſuggeſted the propriety.

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Mr. Sheridan arrived in Dublin, from France, in the month of October, 1766, and, as the Act directs, appeared in Court during the Term to take the benefit of it in form. Very ſhortly after, having no ſcheme of ſecreting his property, a trick too common on ſuch occaſions, a meeting of his Creditors was called by public advertiſement, and the remains of his fortune, which chiefly conſiſted of ſurplus rents ariſing from a certain farm at Quilca, which he had formerly purchaſed from his eldeſt brother, and had in his difficulties mortgaged to a brother-in-law, was veſted in three of the Creditors,* in truſt for the whole, who, without let or moleſtation, permitted him the free enjoyment of the ſame till his death. Some months after Quilca was advertiſed to be ſold,† and the purchaſe money was honourably appropriated, upon an average of the outſtanding debts, to the purpoſe of diſcharging them. . . . . No dirty expedient was attempted to evade payment,‡ though at the interval of

 two

* Tho. Adderly, Eſq. M. P. Robert Birch of Turvey, Eſq. M. P. and Wm. Lefanu, Eſq. who was the principal agent, and honourably, as on every other occaſion thro' an exemplary life of 86 years, diſcharged the truſt repoſed in him. The two laſt of whom were living when theſe Remarks were firſt publiſhed; Mr Birch is now the only ſurviver——*April* 3d, 1798.

† The Equity of Redemption rather, Anno 1789; which brought about 650l. ſubject to the mortgage, which devolved to the mortgagee's daughter, who now enjoys the iſſues and profits.

‡ This paſſage is literally tranſcribed from the Author's MS. It is feelingly given from his own perſonal experience in other caſes, to which it manifeſtly alludes. The Items, not trifling nor a few, are on his Books; upwards of fifteen hundred pounds for board and tuition. . . £1500!!! liberal education truly, with a witneſs. It was not in that way my FATHER ſhowed his gratitude to the worthy preceptor of his youth; knowing a conſiderable ſum for his board and inſtruction had been ſuffered to accumulate, when he came of age he called for the account, and, adding the intereſt, diſcharged the whole to the uttermoſt farthing. This decided proof of his pupil's honour and integrity the good old gentleman

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two and twenty years, no intereſt during that time having been paid or called for, the ſtatute of limitation might have been pleaded in full force; the Creditors were publicly apprized of the intended diſtribution, and every claimant, duly producing vouchers, received his dividend reſpectively apportioned.

In a Work of conſiderable merit and utility, which lately iſſued from the American Preſs, it is recorded, under the head of Eminent Men, that "the Rev. Doctor Thomas Sheridan, "of Ireland, Author of the Engliſh Dictionary, Works on "Elocution, &c. died Auguſt 14th, 1788." Here Father and Son are evidently confounded. . . . Well! and what matter, cries his Worſhip in ſtilts; he ſees no occaſion for ſuch *great minuteneſs*: What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba? Very true, Sir! and is the Sneer leſs applicable to your Alexanders and your Cæſars, thoſe Gods on Earth, who have been hung up to poſterity on as diſputable authority, and to as little purpoſe?——An honeſt man's the nobleſt work of God.—He is an example proper for imitation, and ſuch alone are worthy of commemorating. Pope on the various purſuits of mankind, among others, ſpeaking of your Heroes and your Politicians, comes preciſely to the point:

But grant that thoſe can conquer, theſe can cheat,
'Tis phraſe abſurd to call a VILLAIN great.

September 5, 1796.

gentleman on his death-bed pathetically inculcated to his children, whom, in that awful criſis, he recommended to his care. They are living, and take pleaſure in teſtifying the facts. One inſtance of the like kind, and but one in the courſe of forty years, my FATHER has experienced in his own practice.

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EXTRACTS

AND

ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS,

ALLUDED TO IN THE COURSE OF THE REMARKS ON BOSWELL'S JOHNSON;

INCLUDING THE

REAL HISTORY OF THE GOLD MEDAL

GIVEN TO THE AUTHOR OF THE

TRAGEDY OF DOUGLAS.

OUR Author * in his Obſervations concerning Imitation, quoting a paſſage from Lord Roſcommon, oppoſes it to a ſimilar paſſage in the Eſſay on Criticiſm by our Engliſh Homer. Pope, he remarks, on the Structure of Poetic Numbers, lays down the following rule:

"Tis not enough no harſhneſs gives offence,
The ſound ſhould be an echo to the ſenſe."

Eſſay on Criticiſm, verſe 364.

The laſt line, with the alteration of a ſingle word, is evidently borrowed from the noble Peer; not perhaps with the uſual felicity of great genius, which is to improve upon the original. The idea of making the ſound a comment or echo to the ſenſe is coeval with poetry itſelf; a doctrine founded in nature and clearly demonſtrable on the principles of harmony and good taſte, we may add too, a doctrine univerſally received as orthodox, till of late combated by Dr. Johnſon and a few of his implicit diſciples. It is a favourite ſubject of

* MR. WHYTE... Preliminary Eſſay to his POEMS, new Edit. p. lv.

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of Sheridan's, and for that very reaſon, as it appears, faſtidiouſly, and I will ſay ungratefully, oppoſed by Johnſon, whom Sheridan in the day of emergency had eſſentially ſerved.* The circumſtance could not be obliterated; but as the ſenſe of obligation is painful to ſome minds, from a falſe conceit of ſomething in it humiliating, it was a perpetual bliſter to the Doctor, which, whenever the name of Sheridan was but glanced at, irritated his ſarcaſtic diſpoſition, and was the real ground of that irreconcileable difference which latterly ſubſiſted between them. . . . This may ſound harſh to the memory of that great Moraliſt, but (both have paid the debt of nature) it is ſimply doing juſtice to the other, which indeed is virtually granted, though it muſt be obſerved with manifeſt reluctance, by Boſwell himſelf. Boſwell in his ardour for Johnſon generally uſes the name of Sheridan invidiouſly, and for the moſt part ignorantly or wilfully miſtakes facts, and miſrepreſents the man.† The Writer ſpeaks from his own knowlege, and eſpecially as to two, the moſt conſiderable inſtances, wherein he himſelf was the principal Agent. *Quæ ipſe miſerrima vidi, et quorum pars magna fui*, (b. c.) One of the inſtances alluded to is in another

* Boſwell's Life of Johnſon, 3 vols. Lond. 1793, 2d Edit. vol. i. pp. 341, 2. That Journaliſt on the head of Johnſon's Penſion tells us, "The Earl of "Bute, who was then Prime Miniſter, had the honour to announce this "inſtance of his Sovereign's Bounty, &c." and p. 343, 44, acknowleging on the conceſſion of Lord Loughborough, that Sheridan was the PRIME MOVER of the Buſineſs, ſays "and it is but juſt to add, that Mr. Sheridan "told me, that when he communicated to Dr. Johnſon that a Penſion was "to be granted to him, he replied in a fervour of gratitude, *The Engliſh* "*Language does not afford me terms adequate to my feelings on this occaſion.* "*I muſt have recourſe to the French. I am penetré with his Majeſty's good-*"*neſs*. . . . When I repeated this to Dr. Johnſon he did not contradict it."
BOSWELL.

† Ibid. pp. (a) 349, 50, 51, 52, 53; 417; 543; 581; 589. Vol. ii. pp. 16. (b) 204, 5; 364. Vol. iii. pp. (c) 171; 470: 476; 594, &c.

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another place tranſiently taken up;* the other, as an anecdote connected with the literary hiſtory of the times, ſhall now be related.

Dr. Johnſon affected to diſlike the Tragedy of Douglas, which, as Boſwell ſays, "He called a fooliſh Play," partly, we may ſuppoſe, from national prejudice, being written by a Scotchman, and partly becauſe, as he had heard, it was wonderfully admired by his friend Sheridan, whom, as Boſwell gives it from the Doctor's own mouth, "he wantonly and inſolently treated in a coffee-houſe at Oxford, becauſe he preſented its Author with a Gold Medal;" which Johnſon quaintly enough phraſes "counterfeiting Apollo's coin." — There is ſomething ſuſpicious in the ſtory of this puny gaſconade.—Sheridan was not remarkably pacific in caſes of inſults offered; for, adopting the words of Hamlet, his favourite character, he might juſtly ſay of himſelf, *though I am not ſplenetive and raſh, yet have I in me ſomething dangerous, which let thy wiſdom fear.*† And as to the circumſtance of the Medal it would ſeem both the Doctor and Biographer were but partially informed. When the Tragedy of Douglas firſt came out, Mr. Sheridan, then Manager of the Dublin Theatre, received a printed copy of it from London, which having, according to cuſtom, previouſly read to his company, he caſt for repreſentation; for it is true he highly admired it, and apprized the performers, it was his intention to give the author his third nights, as if the play had been originally brought out at his own houſe; an unprecedented act of liberality in the Manager, which, it was thought, would be wonderfully productive

* WHYTE'S POEMS, new Edition.... Notes on the Theatre or Mirrour for Youth addicted to the Theatro-Mania, p. 297.

† Witneſs the well-known affair of Kelly's Riot, as it was called, detailed by VICTOR, and HITCHCOCK, and noticed in a ſubſequent page.

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productive to the Author. The firſt night, as the play had received the ſanction of a Britiſh audience, the houſe was crammed, and the ſecond night kept pace with the firſt. The printers mean while were not idle; it now iſſued from the Iriſh preſs, and unfortunately for the poor Author, a diſſenting Clergyman, with an eccleſiaſtical anathema againſt him annexed. Things inſtantly took a new turn; the play was reprobrated, and conſidered as a profanation of the clerical character; a faction was raiſed againſt it, and the third night, which was expected to be an overflow, fell miſerably ſhort of Expences. The Manager was in an awkward predicament; he was the cauſe of raiſing expectations, at leaſt innocently, that could not be anſwered; and ſtood committed to the Author and his friends in a buſineſs, which unforeſeen accidents had utterly defeated. . . . An unfeeling mind might have let it reſt there; but it was not an unfeeling mind that dictated the meaſure. Something muſt be done; and though the Writer of this account was at the time a very young man, Mr. Sheridan was pleaſed to communicate to him his difficulties on the occaſion. The firſt idea was to write a friendly letter to the Rev. Author, and accompany it with a handſome piece of plate. To this I took the liberty to object; for, as I underſtood he was not a family man, it might run him to expence in ſhowing it, which in ſuch a caſe was a very natural piece of vanity, and ſurely in itſelf no way reprehenſible. I rather thought ſomething he could conveniently carry about with him would anſwer better; ſuppoſe a piece of Gold in the way of a Medal. Mr. Sheridan thanked me for the hint, and adviſing with Mr. Robert Calderwood, a ſilverſmith of the firſt eminence, a man of letters alſo and good taſte, he threw out the very ſame idea, influenced by pretty much the ſame reaſons:

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reaſons: It was executed accordingly; the intrinſic value ſomewhere about twenty guineas. On one ſide was engraved a Laurel Wreath, and on the reverſe, as nearly as I rememember, at the diſtance of almoſt forty years, the following Inſcription:

Thomas Sheridan, Manager of the Theatre Royal, Smock-alley, Dublin, preſents this ſmall token of his gratitude to the Author of Douglas, for his having enriched the Stage with a Perfect Tragedy.

Soon after I carried it with me to London, and through the favour of Lord Macartney, it was delivered to the Miniſter, Lord Bute, for his countryman the Author of Douglas. But even this alſo he was near being deprived of; for on the road, a few miles from London, I was ſtopped by highwaymen, and preſerved the well-meant offering, by the ſacrifice of my purſe, at the imminent peril of my life. It was conſidered merely as a ſort of compenſation for the diſappointment in regard of the third nights' profits, and certainly no proof of oſtentation in the Manager: on what principle of decency then could Dr. Johnſon treat his old Friend with that wanton inſolence which he boaſts he thought proper to indulge on the occaſion?*

To deal ingenuouſly and give every man fair play, the following paſſage, particularly referred to, touching Johnſon's animoſity to Sheridan and Swift, is given from Boſwell entire:

"On Friday, March 24, 1775,—Johnſon was in high ſpirits this evening at the club, and talked with great animation and ſucceſs. He attacked Swift, as he uſed to do upon all occaſions. "The Tale of a Tub' is ſo much ſuperiour to his other writings, that one can hardly believe he was the author of it. There is in it ſuch a vigour of mind, ſuch a ſwarm of thoughts, ſo much of nature, and art, and life."

I wondered

* Boſwell's Life of Dr. Johnſon, vol. ii. pp. 203, 4, 5.

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I wondered to hear him say of "Gulliver's Travels," "When once you have thought of big men and little men, it is very easy to do the rest." I endeavoured to make a stand for Swift, and tried to rouse those who were much more able to defend him; but in vain. Johnson at last of his own accord allowed very great merit to the inventory of articles found in the pocket of "the Man Mountain," particularly the description of his watch, which it was conjectured was his God, as he consulted it upon all occasions. He observed, that "Swift put his name to but two things, (after he had a name to put,) 'The Plan for the Improvement of the English Language,' and the last 'Drapier's Letter."

"From Swift, there was an easy transition to Mr. Thomas Sheridan.--JOHNSON. "Sheridan is a wonderful admirer of the tragedy of Douglas, and presented its author with a gold medal. Some years ago, at a coffee-house in Oxford, I called to him, 'Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Sheridan, how came you to give a gold medal to Home, for writing that foolish play?' This, you see, was wanton and insolent; but I *meant* to be wanton and insolent. A medal has no value but as a stamp of merit. And was Sheridan to assume to himself the right of giving that stamp? If Sheridan was magnificent enough to bestow a gold medal as an honorary reward of dramatic excellence, he should have requested one of the Universities to choose the person on whom it should be conferred. Sheridan had no right to give a stamp of merit: it was counterfeiting Apollo's coin."

In the paragraph immediately succeeding the above, if Mr. Boswell is right in his statement, the rigid stickler for truth not only encourages temporizing principles and duplicity, but, in certain cases of convenience, gives a latitude to perjury.

ADDENDA.

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ADDENDA.

(a) *Preface*, p. vii. DR. JOHNSON's Biographer is of opinion, that the moſt minute ſingularities which belonged to him ſhould not be omitted; one anecdote of that claſs, perhaps as unaccountable as any which he has related, with all his aſſiduity, has eſcaped him. It was communicated to the writer of this article by Mr. Sheridan, of which he himſelf had ſhortly after an opportunity of being an eye-witneſs. Mr. Sheridan at the time lived in Bedford-ſtreet oppoſite Henrietta-ſtreet, which ranges with the ſouth ſide of Covent Garden, ſo that the proſpect lies open the whole way free of interruption; we were ſtanding together at the drawing-room window expecting Johnſon who was to dine there. Mr. Sheridan aſked me could I ſee the length of the garden. 'No, ſir!' 'Take out your Opera-glaſs, Johnſon is coming; you may know him by his gait.' I perceived him at a good diſtance working along with a peculiar ſolemnity of deportment, and an awkward ſort of meaſured ſtep; at that time the broad flagging on each ſide the ſtreets was not univerſally adopted, and ſtone poſts were in faſhion to prevent the annoyance of carriages. Upon every poſt as he paſſed along, I could obſerve he deliberately laid his hand; but miſſing one of them, when he had got at ſome diſtance, he ſeemed ſuddenly to recollect himſelf, and immediately returning back, carefully performed the accuſtomed ceremony, and reſumed his former courſe, not omitting one till he gained the croſſing. This, Mr. Sheridan aſſured me, however odd it might appear, was his conſtant practice; but why or wherefore he could not inform me. . . Now for a dinner ſcene.

The houſe on the right at the bottom of Beaufort-buildings was occupied by Mr. Chamberlaine, Mrs. Sheridan's

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eldeſt brother, by whom Johnſon was often invited in the ſnug way with the family party. At one of thoſe ſocial meetings Johnſon as uſual ſat next the lady of the houſe; the deſſert ſtill continuing, and the ladies in no haſte to withdraw, Mrs. Chamberlaine had moved a little back from the table, and was careleſsly dangling her foot backwards and forwards as ſhe ſat, enjoying the feaſt of reaſon and the flow of ſoul. Johnſon the while in a moment of abſtraction was convulſively working his hand up and down, which the lady obſerving, ſhe roguiſhly edged her foot within his reach, and, as might partly have been expected, Johnſon clenched hold of it, and drew off her ſhoe; ſhe ſtarted, and haſtily exclaimed, 'O, fy! Mr. Johnſon!' The company at firſt knew not what to make of it; but one of them, perceiving the joke, tittered. Johnſon, not improbably aware of the trick, apologized: 'Nay, madam, recollect yourſelf; I know not that I have juſtly incurred your rebuke; the emotion was involuntary, and the action not intentionally rude.'

On another occaſion, the Relater of theſe Anecdotes, who at the time reſided in the houſe along with his good friend, Mr. Chamberlaine, was near getting himſelf into a hobble: Going rather abruptly into the drawing-room, he found Dr. Lucas, Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Chamberlaine with two large folios on the table before them; Johnſon's Dictionary, then but lately publiſhed. One of the volumes lay open, and popping his head in among them, the firſt word that caught his eye was Helter-ſkelter.' . . . 'Helter-ſkelter, from Deolɼeen ɼceabo, the darkneſs of hell; hell being a place of confuſion.' . . . 'That's a very far-fetched etymology,' cries the youngſter; the three gentlemen ſeemed thunder-ſtruck, and ſtaring at him for a moment, caſt a ſignificant glance towards the window, where ſtood an odd looking figure,

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figure, which he had not before noticed, obſerving the boats paſſing on the Thames. 'Twas Johnſon! whom indeed he did not know, and luckily for him, he ſeemed wholly abſorbed in his own contemplations. 'Well, young ſir!' ſays Mr. Chamberlaine, again caſting an eye towards the window, 'I ſuppoſe you can give a better derivation.' 'O yes, ſir! in an inſtant; from the Latin; *bilariter celeriter*, merrily and ſwiftly: won't that do?'... No anſwer was made, but they huſtled him out of the room as faſt as they could; and afterwards, with ſome judicious animadverſions on his temerity, our flippant etymologiſt was made ſenſible how near he was getting, what perhaps he deſerved, a good rap over the knuckles.

As one ſtory often begets another, one little Anecdote more, and for the preſent we have done..... Mr. Chamberlaine, already mentioned, was a ſurgeon, eminent in his profeſſion; for many a long year the Oracle of the Grecian coffee-houſe, and the delight of the young Templars, particularly from Ireland; for he was a humouriſt and dearly loved a quibble. In the year 1758, MR. WHYTE, of *Grafton-ſtreet, Dublin*, opened his Seminary for Education. Several of his friends honoured him with particular attention on the occaſion, and, according to good old cuſtom, made him preſents towards houſe-keeping; among the reſt Mr. Chamberlaine ſent him a very handſome Tea-cheſt with an inſcription on a ſilver plate neatly let into the lid,

"TU DOCES,"

Thou teacheſt; a profeſſional alluſion, by conſtruction in the dialect of punſters—thou tea-cheſt.

The Author of the Curioſities of Literature, printed Anno 1784, mentions a ſimilar device, which, according to the relation, "has been lately given by the ingenious Harry Erſkine, who inſcribed on his Tea-cheſt the following words"——

"TU DOCES."

"Theſe,

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" Theſe, however inapplicable they may appear, when tranſlated into our vernacular tongue run thus——

" THOU TEA-CHEST."

" The ſecond perſon ſingular of the verb, *docere*, making a very neat pun of the ſubſtantive Tea-cheſt."

Cur. of Literature, London, vol. i. p. 564.

Mr. Chamberlaine has evidently the advantage of Mr. Erſkine in two material points, viz. precedence as to time, and aptitude in the application: and after all, like moſt travelling Anecdotes, as Voltaire ſays of Columbus's Egg, it may have been told of others. So Wyllyam of Cloudeſlé, a famous old Engliſh Archer, ſhot the apple off his ſon's head, before William Tell, the celebrated Swiſs, was born. The ſame is recorded of one Tocho, a Goth.

'Pſha!' cries the critic, 'this is abſolute trifling; what in the name of common ſenſe has all this to ſay to Johnſon?' Why nothing, ſir! it has nothing to ſay to Johnſon: 'tis a mere bagatelle, brought in head and ſhoulders, one ſcarce can tell why; but before you cenſure, by way of apologue, apply it, and ſee if many of the ſtories ſeriouſly obtruded by Mr. Boſwell, ay! and by greater clerks than he, don't come preciſely under the ſame deſcription.

(1) page 13.—*Corporeal notice, as meditated againſt the reprobated tranſlator of Oſſian*, . . . Mr. Boſwell, who can ſeldom be accuſed of nationality, on the circumſtance alluded to, ſays—'at this time the controverſy concerning the pieces publiſhed by Mr. James Macpherſon, as tranſlations of Oſſian, was at its height. Johnſon had all along denied their authenticity, and what was ſtill more provoking to their admirers, maintained that they had no merit. The ſubject having been introduced by Dr. Fordyce, Dr. Blair, relying on the internal evidence of their antiquity, aſked Dr. Johnſon, whether he thought any man of modern age could

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could have written ſuch poems? Johnſon replied, 'Yes, ſir! many men, many women, and many children;' this is given as his ſerious opinion; but we are yet to learn, whether it is meant as a ſpecimen of his venerated friend's judgment, or his inviolable regard to truth. It is certain however that Dr. Johnſon plumed himſelf highly on his own ſagacity on that occaſion, as well as on the detection of the Cock-lane Ghoſt, which after all he did not detect;* and maintained his aſſertions with an aſperity of language unbecoming a philoſopher: we ſhall venture to oppoſe him with a different opinion; an opinion which the Doctor himſelf might have bowed to without diſparagement, though not accompanied with ſo much rage. Hear what Dr. Young ſays in his memoir relating to thoſe poems; addreſſed to the Royal Iriſh Academy, of which that gentleman is a diſtinguiſhed member, and one of its brighteſt ornaments. He alſo made a tour to the Highlands.

"The

* Boſwell in his accuſtomed mode of prefacing, with a pompous flouriſh on his illuſtrious friend's ſagacity, vol. i. pp. 370, 1, 2, gives the tale of this famous detection as it appeared in the Public Papers, written by the Sage himſelf, ſetting forth, in ſubſtance, as follows: that he, aſſiſted by many others of rank and character, paid a viſit to a little girl, ſuppoſed to be diſturbed by a ſpirit, and having examined the matter with a jealous attention, did ask certain queſtions, which the ſaid ghoſt, as we may well preſume, not conceiving itſelf obliged to anſwer interrogatories, did not think convenient to reply to; upon which the gentlemen, who thus examined the evidence, being ſatisfied of its falſity (not having uttered a ſingle ſyllable) came to the following reſolution, which, referring to the ſtatement, verbatim runs thus:

"It is, therefore, the opinion of the whole aſſembly, that the child has ſome art of making or counterfeiting a particular noiſe, and that there is no agency of any higher cauſe."

He was of opinion it was a trick, and ſo were thouſands beſides; but what the particular art or contrivance of the little female Breſlaw was, remains in its priſtine obſcurity to this day. Call you that detection?

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" The great intereſt which has for many years been taken in the controverſy concerning the authenticity of Mr. M'Pherſon's Oſſian, made me deſirous of collecting all the information in my power, during my excurſion through the Scottiſh Highlands in the Summer of 1784. The following poems are part of the collection which I made at the time; and notwithſtanding Mr. Hill has done ſo much towards bringing this warmly-conteſted queſtion to a decided iſſue; I imagined they might throw ſome new additional light on the ſubject. I have therefore ventured to lay them before the Academy, with tranſlations and a few explanatory notes."

" Mr. M'Pherſon is by many ſuppoſed to be the ſole and original Author of the Compoſitions which he has publiſhed as tranſlations of the Works of Oſſian; this charge I am enabled to refute, at leaſt in part, having fortunately met with the Originals of ſome of them. Mr. M'Pherſon, I acknowledge, hath taken very great liberties with them; retrenching, adding and altering as he judged proper: but we muſt admit that he has diſcovered great ingenuity in theſe variations."

And ſpeaking of his own tranſlation he farther ſays.... " Upon the whole, I believe no errors of material conſequence have eſcaped me; but if there be ſuch, the originals are at hand, by which they may be corrected; ſome of which," he tells us, " are current in Ireland, and to be ſeen amongſt the Iriſh Manuſcripts in the Library of the College of Dublin."

Tranſactions of the Royal Iriſh Academy, Dublin 1787, Vol. i. under the head of Antiquities, page 43 paſſim.

An Iriſhman, we ſee, has candour and honeſty enough to acknowlege merit and do juſtice to Mr. Macpherſon, while his countryman Boſwell complaiſantly abandons the cauſe, and

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and joins iſſue with his adverſary. Dr. Johnſon, whatever he might really think of Swift, would hardly call this gentleman "a very ſhallow fellow:", but he was a particular man, and there is no ſwearing what he might be tempted to.

Mr. Macpherſon, it ſeems, having heard of ſome illiberal attacks on his character made behind his back by Dr. Johnſon, thought fit to remonſtrate by letter, which letter is however conveniently kept out of ſight, ſo that we are left to imagine the contents; a ſtrong foundation for doubts and ſurmiſes, where a point was to be gained. Mr. Boſwell, as you are to ſuppoſe, ſcrupulouſly accurate in his account, gives us verbatim the ſage's reply; the ſubſtance of which, conveyed in very appoſite terms, is that he would cudgel him. Mr. Boſwell's illuſtrious friend appears now upon the ſtage in a new character, and his minute Biographer is at ſome pains to convince his readers, that he was no leſs able than willing to perform it; "for having provided himſelf with a proper implement, I have no doubt," ſaith his paper champion, "but he would have made his corporal proweſs be felt as much as his intellectual." To put the matter beyond controverſy, as deeds ſpeak louder than words, he corroborates his opinion by the relation of ſome half dozen inſtances; ſeveral of them ludicrous enough, of which, courteous Reader! if haply thou haſt not ſeen the book, the following will give thee a delectable idea.

"In the Play-houſe at Lichfield, Johnſon having quitted a chair that was placed for him behind the ſcenes, a gentleman took poſſeſſion of it, and on Johnſon's return, rudely refuſed to give it up; Johnſon laid hold of it, and toſſed him and the chair into the pit.". . . . The gentleman could not, one ſhould think, be *very rudely* diſpoſed, who could ſo

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ſo complaiſantly ſit quiet, and without ſtruggle ſubmit to ſo unceremonious and awkward an exhibition. And, conſidering the uncouthneſs of the vehicle, and the diſtance they muſt have been at from the front of the ſtage, which the great man had to carry the audacious uſurper, together with the width of the orcheſtra, to ſay nothing of the Doctor's viſual incapacity and the elevation of the chevaux-de-friſe between that and the pit, I think we may fairly cry, bounce! . . . There are moreover a few little items growing out of the queſtion; as the treſpaſs upon decency and the reſpect due to the audience, ſome of whom might have materially ſuffered under the preſſure of ſuch an unexpected intruſion; and, as they could not well be maſter of the jeſt, judging by appearances, they might have been prompted to eſpouſe the quarrel of the party aggrieved, and in the way of ſummary juſtice have ſhown Goliath a trick worth two of it. In a neighbouring kingdom not improbably it would have paſſed for ſheer fun; they order matters better in Britain. It was a manifeſt breach of the peace, and cognizable by another juriſdiction, to which the gentleman moſt likely would have reſorted. We have a caſe very much in point before us... *Vide* the maſter of Auchenleck's reports, vol. ii. p. 171.—Johnſon verſus Macpherſon. . . "Any violence offered I ſhall do my beſt to repel, and what I cannot do for myſelf the law ſhall do for me. I hope I ſhall never be deterred from detecting what I think a cheat by the menaces of a ruffian."—The plea of refuſing a chair, we apprehend, would have appeared but a lame excuſe, before a jury, for a fractured ſkull or a diſlocated limb. What ſays Mr. Boſwell? he is a lawyer; is the caſe altered? 'Nay, ſir! Johnſon; Johnſon, ſir! may ſay or do any thing.'

What

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What effect Mr. Boſwell's intimidating picture of Johnſon produced on the mind of Macpherſon we are not told; probably it never tranſpired; that it would have been laughed at by Sheridan numbers of his contemporaries yet living, I think, will readily believe. Records, no leſs authentic than Mr. Boſwell's, are in being, which greatly favour the preſumption; the picture they afford of him may be no unſuitable companion to hang up with that of Johnſon, and though but a ſketch, in the eye of a connoiſeur, will hardly appear to diſadvantage.

It muſt in the firſt place be honeſtly confeſſed that we have no inſtance on record of Sheridan's excellency at club-law; cudgel-playing was not his forte. The gentlemen of his country are wont to reſort to other weapons, a cuſtom, every thinking creature muſt acknowlege, more honoured in the breach than the obſervance, at which, however, if it were his cue to fight, Johnſon would have had but little chance. The records before referred to, mention one or two notorious facts; which Mr. Boſwell, as they tend to illuſtrate his kind friend's true character, probably never honoured with a peruſal. It is there ſaid, that when ſome captious blades, the leaders of a deſperate party, wantonly attacked him in his profeſſion, ſtepping forward, he anſwered their outrage publicly from the ſtage, with the moſt becoming ſpirit and propriety: This ſo exaſperated the principal ringleader, that he afterwards ruſhed in behind the ſcenes, and forced his way to his dreſſing-room, where he met with the chaſtiſement his brutal arrogance richly deſerved.

And now the Lawyers came in for their ſhare of the quarrel. The Gentleman who began the affair was taken up for aſſaulting Mr. Sheridan, and Mr. Sheridan was indicted for aſſaulting and beating the Gentleman. . . . . Nobody at that time

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would believe, that a Jury could be found in Dublin that would find a Gentleman guilty. However they were miſtaken. . . . Lord Chief Juſtice Marlay, who preſided on the bench, was the decided ſupporter of order and decorum. Packed juries had no buſineſs in his court; and the ſheriffs, agreeable to their inſtructions, could impanel none but able and ſufficient jurors, at their peril.

The day of trial came on. . . . Mr. Sheridan appeared as the firſt culprit, and was tried for aſſaulting and beating the Gentleman, as Mr. Kelly was conſtantly called in the diſpute. But it appearing fully to the Jury, on the oaths of three or four men, whoſe honeſty was unqueſtionable, that the Gentleman gave the Manager ſuch abuſive and provoking language in his dreſſing-room, as compelled him to beat him out of it, and that no other perſon touched him, the Jury acquitted the priſoner without going out of the box.

Then the Gentleman appeared at the bar. . . . In the courſe of the trial Mr. Sheridan was called upon the table, and, while he was anſwering the queſtions propoſed to him, a very eminent though not a very mannerly counſellor, on the ſide of the priſoner, ſaid, "he wanted to ſee a curioſity; I have often ſeen, continued he, a gentleman ſoldier, and a gentleman taylor, but I have never ſeen a gentleman player." Mr. Sheridan, without the leaſt embarraſſment, modeſtly bowed, and ſaid, "Sir, I hope you ſee one now." A loud murmur of applauſe ran through the court, and the counſellor, notwithſtanding his effrontery, ſat down abaſhed, and never aſked him another queſtion. . . . In ſhort, the JURY found the GENTLEMAN priſoner guilty, and the ſentence was a *fine of five hundred pounds, and three months impriſonment.*

The

The following paragraph is added, not ſo much as it reſpects Mr. Sheridan, as for the uſeful leſſon it conveys to thoſe who are fond of ruſhing into ſcrapes, and ſhews, in the hour of difficulty, what reliance they can have on friends who are involved in a bad cauſe.

This Mr. Kelly, when the law-ſuit commenced, imagined he ſhould be liberally ſupported, and hundreds ſubſcribed to carry it on; but upon conviction he found himſelf wholly deſerted, and after ſuffering ſome time in confinement, became ſo thoroughly ſenſible of his error, that at laſt he was obliged to apply to Mr. Sheridan, who inſtantly ſolicited Government to relinquiſh the fine of 500l. which was granted him, and he became ſolicitor and bail himſelf to the Court of King's Bench for the enlargement of the Gentleman.

Thus, ample redreſs was procured for the Manager and Actors, by obtaining that reſpect to be paid to the ſcenes of the Theatre-Royal in Dublin, which no other Theatre, till then, had the happineſs to maintain: for, from that hour, not even the firſt man of quality in the kingdom ever aſked or attempted to get behind the ſcenes; and before that happy æra, every perſon who was maſter of a ſword, was ſure to draw it on the ſtage door-keeper, if he denied him entrance. And thus was the long uſurped tyranny of a ſet of wanton and diſſolute gentlemen (the greateſt nuiſance that any city ever groaned under) effectually ſubdued, and the rights of the more decent and orderly part of the community recovered by the ſpirit and firmneſs of the Manager, judicially ſeconded by a worthy Lord Chief Juſtice and an honeſt Jury.

This is but a very brief abſtract of Hitchcock's relation of the facts at large, incorporated into his work, from the hiſtory

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hiſtory of the time given by Mr. Victor, a gentleman of learning and unimpeached veracity, who was himſelf preſent, and a party concerned in the ſeveral tranſactions related. The trial is on record, and numbers of living witneſſes can juſtify the Facts. Beſides the preſent purpoſe, it alſo ſhews how very unlikely Sheridan was to bear unnoticed that wanton inſolence, mentioned on another occaſion, with which Doctor Johnſon boaſted he intentionally treated his old friend in a public coffee-houſe at Oxford. . . . . See Boſwell, vol. i. pp. 204, 5.

If I have been prolix on this occaſion, the admirers of Mr. Boſwell muſt allow, it was with a good example before me. It was not however to exalt a favourite at the expence of others, but ſimply to do juſtice and ſet an injured character in a proper point of view.

(2) page 16.—*Dr. Johnſon had been tried and found wanting.* . . " He accepted of an offer to be employed as uſher in the ſchool of Market Boſworth, and after a few months he relinquiſhed a ſituation which all his life afterwards he recollected with the ſtrongeſt averſion, and even a degree of horrour.". . . . [Boſwell, vol. i. pp. 5, 690.] . . . . " He ſet up a private academy at Edial, near his native city; but the only pupils that were ever put under his care were the celebrated David Garrick, his brother George, and a Mr. Offely. . . . But he was no more ſatisfied with his ſituation as Maſter of an Academy, than that of the Uſher of a School, and did not keep it above a year and a half." [Ibid. pp. 72, 73.] Again, " He felt the hardſhip of writing for bread, and was therefore willing to reſume the office of a School-maſter." Accordingly we find his friends ſoliciting for him a Maſter of Arts' Degree, to qualify him for a Free School of 60l. per Ann. in Shropſhire. . . . Pope recommended him to Earl Gower, who

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who endeavoured to procure for him a Degree from Dublin, by a letter (which is in print) to a friend of Dean Swift, entreating him to uſe his intereſt with the Dean, " to perſuade the Univerſity of Dublin to ſend a Diploma to him [Earl Gower] conſtituting this poor man Maſter of Arts in their Univerſity." [Ibid. pp. 107, 8, 9, 10.] .... His diſappointment in this laſt attempt has been imputed partly to ſome negligence or remiſſneſs of Swift's, on the bare ſuppoſition of which, for it no where was ever proved, Johnſon could never afterwards endure him. Now on the other hand, changing ſituations and ſuppoſing the caſe Swift's, and that he had perſiſted in ſuch contumelious treatment of Johnſon, Mr. Boſwell with perfect compoſure would ſay, " I have no feeling for ſuch perſevering reſentment;" or poſſibly in his more ſplenetive moments he might have had recourſe to his favourite expedient, " the laſh of wit."

Neither was Sheridan wanting in Academic honours. He was Maſter of Arts in three of the moſt learned Univerſities of Europe, Oxford, Cambridge and Dublin; in the latter of which, his Alma-Mater, he was regularly matriculated, and obtained the diſtinction in due courſe of gradation, where the qualifications are by no means trifling, and the examinations ſingularly ſevere.... In the year 1758 he paid a viſit in his literary capacity to Oxford, and immediately on his arrival in that renowned ſeat of eminent profeſſors, he was diſtinguiſhed with unuſual attention; and on Tueſday November 28th, was admitted in congregation to the degree of Maſter of Arts. In a ſubſequent viſit ſoon after to the ſiſter Univerſity, Cambridge, he experienced the like honourable reception, and had the ſame degree conferred on him there alſo. At Edinburgh he was honoured with the Freedom of the City, which was preſented to him by the hands

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hands of Dr. Robertſon, the celebrated profeſſor of hiſtory, &c. This is ſcarcely compatible with the idea of Sheridan, which Mr. Boſwell endeavours to impreſs upon the minds of his readers, on the authority of the irrefragable Doctor.

In the European Magazine for December 1788, p. 410, we are told, Mr. Sheridan's firſt appearance on the Stage was on the 20th of January 1743. In this ſtatement there is a ſmall miſtake, probably an error of the preſs. Mr. Hitchcock, from whoſe Work the account is taken, p. 128, ſays: "On the 29th of January 1742—3, the part of Richard was attempted by a young gentleman at Smock-alley Theatre. This attempt ſucceeded beyond the moſt ſanguine expectations of the friends of our young candidate for fame, and equalled any firſt eſſay ever remembered by the oldeſt performers on the Iriſh Stage. Thus encouraged, our adventurer a few days after undertook the character of Mithridates in the Tragedy of that name; in which he ſo amply confirmed public opinion, that he threw off the diſguiſe, and was ſhortly after announced to the town for a ſecond performance of Richard, by the name of Mr. Sheridan. . . . . Like Garrick he at firſt ſhone forth a finiſhed Actor, and at once attained the heights which many others ſpend years in labouring to gain. . . . . Mr. Sheridan was born in the year 1719, and early diſcovering ſigns of genius, was at a proper age ſent to Weſtminſter-ſchool, where he remained till he was prepared to enter the Univerſity of Dublin. After going through his ſtudies with great eclat, and taking his degrees, he quitted College. . . . . The profeſſion he embraced, involved the greateſt part of his life in a perpetual round of anxious toil, and unceaſing fatigue, wherein he experienced every ſpecies of ingratitude and perfidy."

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The conductor of the periodic work, cited in the preceding paragraph, ſpeaking of Mr. Sheridan, p. 327, ſays :—"About 1764 he went to France, and took up his reſidence at Blois by order of his Majeſty, as has been aſſerted," and for this aſſertion, he quotes the correſpondence of Wilkes and Horne, p. 76. The Author of the Biographia Dramatica, article Sheridan, alſo alledges the ſame reaſon, his Majeſty's order, for Mr. Sheridan's retiring to France. Upon what principle his Majeſty ſhould have interfered in the buſineſs, or for what end ſuch a notion was propagated, I am at a loſs to explain. It was the perſecution of his mercileſs creditors that drove him thither, as was ſtated in the application to the Iriſh Houſe of Commons, not his Majeſty's order; and that Mr. Sheridan could in any wiſe have authorized ſuch an idle report is ſufficiently refuted by his letters.

In thoſe Memoirs of his Life, by no means ill written, it is alſo aſſerted, that "in 1776 he acted ſeveral nights at Covent Garden; after this he never performed again as an Actor." This is another proof among thouſands how little is known in England of what is really going on in the ſiſter kingdom, and affords a uſeful leſſon, not to rely with implicit confidence on the accounts given of foreign tranſactions and more remote periods. Mr. Sheridan performed as an Actor in Dublin in the year 1776 and 1777. He never played as a ſalary performer; but from a principle of equity, relying ſolely upon his own powers, after he quitted the helm, and without laying the manager under any difficulties, he played always on ſhares, and without any tie on either ſide, but that of mutual advantage. The following account of what accrued ſingly to Mr. Sheridan from his performance, within the ſpace of nine months, four of which the houſe was ſhut, during his

his laſt campaign in Dublin, corroborates our aſſertion, and proves to demonſtration the eſtimation he was held in.

Theatre Royal, Crow-ſtreet,— Mr. Sheridan's dividends.

1776, June 15	Hamlet - -	40	1	11
20	King Lear -	36	16	6
25	Cato - -	41	15	9
30	Richard the 3d	43	0	0
Novem. 11	King Lear -	43	6	11½
18	Earl of Eſſex -	28	7	11½
22	Double Dealer -	24	7	9½
25	Cato - -	31	14	7
29	Richard the 3d -	19	6	2½
Decem. 2	Hamlet -	39	19	0
6	Double Dealer -	19	2	2
9	Merchant of Venice	39	12	9
16	Provoked Huſband	45	2	2
20	Merchant of Venice	24	11	0½
1777, Jan. 27	King John -	48	19	4
31	Roman Father -	37	12	11
February 3	King John -	34	2	9½
7	Macbeth -	47	14	11½
10	Cato - -	14	8	5½
14	Careleſs Huſband (*)	106	15	10
24	Macbeth -	38	5	8
28	King John -	3	10	11½
March 5	Merchant of Venice	29	3	1½
7	Henry the 8th	7	6	3
14	Hamlet (*) -	121	8	4
	Total accruing to Mr. Sheridan	£966	13	5

Nearly 40l. per night, upon an average, including two Benefits. (*) Adventitious circumſtances in his favour there were none; novelty, that moſt powerful charm, was utterly

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out of the queſtion; Mr. Sheridan was in an advanced period of life, near ſixty; thirty-five years of which he had ſpent in the ſervice of the Public, and of that time by far the greateſt part in Dublin, his native city, where of courſe his appearance was familiar. The Theatre was not then in the firſt ſtyle of faſhionable amuſements; conſequently in its wane, and the company by no means a ſtrong one: add to this the acting proprietor's private diſtreſſes, and the diſadvantages he laboured under as to the collateral aids of muſic and decorations, and it muſt be allowed, ſuch ſignal evidence of public attention, produced by the ſole attraction of an individual, is a confirmation of no common merit.

He afterwards went to the country for his health, and played the ſummer ſeaſon in Cork, with equal advantage to his reputation, and proportionally ſuperior in point of profit; yet the author of the Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Sheridan, already cited, aſſures us he played at Covent Garden, in the year 1776, "and never after this performed again as an actor." So much for the faith of Hiſtory!

The preceding account of the emolument ariſing to Mr. Sheridan, from his twenty-five nights of performance, was communicated to the writer by Samuel Guinneſs, Eſq. Mr. Sheridan's confidential friend on the occaſion, who received the money for him, whoſe return, in his own handwriting, now lies before me, from which the above is literally copied. It is alſo to be farther obſerved, in juſtice to Mr. Ryder, then Manager, that on account of the low ſtate of his company, having no capital performer, particularly in the tragic line, to ſecond him, the expence of the Houſe, which was generally rated at ſixty pound a night, was reduced, and charged only fifty pound a night to Mr. Sheridan.

The following is the advertiſement of his laſt appearance in Hamlet, above mentioned, announced as uſual in Faulkner's,

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the Freeman's, and the Hibernian Journal, in which not one additional name appears to enhance the repreſentation, from which a pretty adequate idea may be formed of the ſtrength, or rather weakneſs, of the company.

FOR THE BENEFIT OF MR. SHERIDAN.

THEATRE-ROYAL, CROW-STREET.

THIS EVENING,

FRIDAY, MARCH THE 14TH, 1777,

WILL BE PRESENTED THE TRAGEDY OF

H A M L E T.

THE PART OF HAMLET BY MR. SHERIDAN,

BEING POSITIVELY THE LAST NIGHT OF HIS PERFORMING THIS SEASON.

TO WHICH WILL BE ADDED,

T H E C I T I Z E N.

YOUNG PHILPOT MR. RYDER.

BEFORE THE FARCE, A PRELUDE.

MARIA IN THE CITIZEN, AND THE LADY IN THE PRELUDE, MISS BARSANTI.

After the Play Mr. Sheridan, by deſire, will recite

DRYDEN'S CELEBRATED

ODE ON THE POWER OF MUSIC.

PLACES FOR THE BOXES TO BE TAKEN OF MR. CULLEN.

THE HOUSE TO BE ILLUMINATED WITH WAX.

By

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By way of contraſt, let us now turn our eyes, for a moment, on another period of Theatric hiſtory. The retroſpect is not void of utility; it is perfectly conſonant to our ſubject, and cannot but be intereſting to the amateur.

The Theatre in Crow-ſtreet, Dublin, was erected under the auſpices of Spranger Barry, Eſq. in oppoſition to Sheridan. Monday the 23d of October 1758, the houſe opened with the Kind Impoſtor, a Comedy by Cibber, under the conduct of Meſſrs. Barry and Woodward, joint Managers; and Mr. Sheridan, who was then in England, from ſome heavy loſſes and diſappointments he had ſuſtained, declining to come over, Smock-alley was in no condition to make head againſt them, ſo that ſucceſs and fortune ſeemed wholly at their devotion. They had the advantage of novelty in all points; a new and ſplendid Theatre; a rich and capital wardrobe, a ſelect and well-appointed company, an excellent band, their own perſonal conſequence, youth, beauty, and every imaginable attraction in their favour. Mr. Barry, one of the fineſt and moſt intereſting figures in nature, at the acme of his profeſſion in the Tragic walk, was ſcarcely turned of forty, and Woodward, with his coffers full of guineas, a no leſs diſtinguiſhed favourite in the Comic ſcene, in the meridian of life. Mrs. Dancer [the celebrated Mrs. Crawford] rapidly riſing into fame; Mrs. Fitzhenry in her zenith; Mrs. Jefferſon, and a long *et cætera* of accompliſhed heroines, one ſhould think, of themſelves ſufficient to enſure their triumph; accordingly the cloſe of the ſeaſon ſaw the new Managers in unrivalled poſſeſſion, exulting in the plenitude of Theatric power. But it is the ſucceeding ſeaſon we have now more immediately in view. In the opinion of the moſt diſcerning moral and political writers, the deareſt intereſts of ſociety are influenced by the ſtate of public amuſements,

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amuſements, and the flouriſhing condition of a Theatre is conſidered as one of the ſtrongeſt proofs of the civilization and proſperity of a people. The ſeaſon referred to, commencing with the Winter of the year 1759, and ending in 1760, is deſcribed as one of the moſt brilliant and ſucceſsful ever known with Ireland, and for that reaſon, the moſt worthy of notice; beſides, the Author, having by a ſingular accident obtained the only authentic document on the ſubject, has it in his power, not only to aſcertain to a ſhilling the groſs amount of the money received that memorable ſeaſon, but farther to gratify curioſity with a ſpecification of the particular receipts of fourteen of their moſt ſplendid exhibitions.

The Managers having ſucceſsfully completed their recruiting buſineſs in England, and along with other capital acquiſitions, having added Mr. Moſſop to their forces, who was then, as Davies ſays, eſteemed in London the ſheet-anchor of Tragedy, and the reigning favourite next to Garrick, they returned with expectations as ſanguine and as flattering as the warmeſt fancy could ſuggeſt. That thoſe expectations were founded on reaſon and probability, will be ſeen by a ſlight review of their recommendations. Their company, as Hitchcock not unwarrantably deſcribes it, was, perhaps, the ſtrongeſt, and beſt formed, of any hitherto beheld in Ireland. High in public favour, their credit eſtabliſhed, a new Theatre, an excellent wardrobe; they had every advantage which could be derived from a combination of circumſtances ſo fortunate. To crown theſe, and give animation to the whole, they were in a very eminent degree poſſeſſed of every influence which the court could give. Robert Wood, Eſq. then Maſter of the Revels, in this kingdom, appointed Mr. Barry and Mr. Woodward, his deputies, by which Crow-ſtreet became the Theatre-Royal. He alſo conferred upon them the office of directors of his Majeſty's Band;

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Band; a poſt indeed of more honour than profit. The Duke of Dorſet then Lord Lieutenant, who was remarkably popular, and the Ducheſs, were peculiarly fond of the Theatre, and honoured it with their preſence generally once or twice a week during the ſeaſon.

Thus powerfully prepared, they took the field, and the houſe opened Wedneſday, October 3d, 1759. Every thing ſeemed to wear a propitious aſpect at the New Theatre-Royal, Crow-ſtreet; neither pains nor expence was ſpared in preparing the pieces for repreſentation. The Tragedies were got up in a ſtyle of ſuperior ſplendour. The expence of the mere guards in Coriolanus amounted to £3. 10. per night. The guards and chorus ſingers in Alexander to 8l. The acting of the Tragedies was firſt rate. The force of the two heroes of the buſkin, (and never were two tragedians of ſuch uncommon excellence whoſe abilities better accorded) was aided by the powerful attractions of Mrs. Dancer and Mrs. Fitzhenry. A ſpecimen or two will ſhew the ſtrength of their repreſentations: as, Othello, Mr. Barry; Roderigo, Mr. Woodward; Caſſio, Mr. Dexter; Brabantio, Mr. Walker; Iago, Mr. Moſſop; Deſdemona, Mrs. Dancer; and Emilia, Mrs. Fitzhenry. Venice Preſerved: Pierre, Mr. Moſſop; Jaffier, Mr. Barry; Belvidera, Mrs. Dancer. In Jane Shore: Haſtings, Barry; Dumont, Moſſop; Jane Shore, Mrs. Dancer; Alicia, Mrs. Fitzhenry. All for Love: Anthony, Barry; Dolabella, Dexter; Ventidius, Moſſop; Octavia, Mrs. Dancer; Cleopatra, Mrs. Fitzhenry. Theſe, with Mr. Woodward's excellent Pantomines, brought out in the higheſt perfection, were deſerving every encouragement. Almoſt every night produced ſome novelty; and ſometime before the cloſe of the ſeaſon, Mrs. Abington, that elegant and faſhionable Actreſs, as Boſwell juſtly ſtyles her in his life of Johnſon, joined the ſtandards of Crow-ſtreet.

Mr.

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Mr. William Barry, the Manager's brother, was Treasurer to the Theatre; his receipt-book is now in my possession, from which the following account of the receipts of the season of 1759, 60, is extracted; from a view of which, compared with what Sheridan alone drew in the last year of his performance, it must be necessarily admitted, that the accounts given of his theatrical consequence, however depreciated by Johnson and Boswell, are not exaggerated.

1760, June 4th, Produce of 163 plays acted this season, per Treasurer's Book	£ 11621	13	6½
From Government for three plays -	90	0	0
Ditto ..... one play -	22	15	0
Total amount, Govermt. plays included,	£ 11734	8	6½
Receipts of the last 14 Plays, viz.			
May 7, Barbarossa, Mossop's Benefit	133	11	6
9, Winter's Tale - -	109	19	2
10, Julius Cæsar - -	94	10	5
12, Winter's Tale -	40	17	11
14, Julius Cæsar, 2d night -	30	15	4
16, Conscious Lovers, F. Masons' Nt.	149	0	3
17, Recruiting Officer, Command	57	18	1
19, *Double Dealer* - -	12	15	8
22, *Provoked Husband*, Mrs. Abington	129	4	10
23, Othello - - -	59	7	4
28, *Richard the Third* - -	29	12	7
29, *Earl of Essex* - -	65	3	3½
30, The Revenge - -	45	7	10
June 4, Committee, Government Play	4	6	8
For ditto, from Government	22	15	0
Total produce of 14 plays -	£ 985	5	10½
Advantage on the side of Sheridan	683	19	1½
Amount of Sheridan's 14 nights, per contra	£ 1669	5	0

Receipts

Receipts of 25 plays in which Mr. Sheridan was concerned the laſt year of his performance in Dublin, taken from the books of the theatre, under the management of Ryder.

1776, June 15,	Hamlet - -	130	3	10
20,	King Lear	123	13	0
25,	Cato -	133	11	6
30,	*Richard the Third*	136	0	0
Nov. 11,	King Lear	136	13	11
18,	*Earl of Eſſex*	106	15	11
22,	*Double Dealer*	98	15	7
25,	Cato -	113	9	2
29,	*Richard the Third*	88	12	5
Dec. 2,	Hamlet -	129	18	0
6,	*Double Dealer*	88	4	4
	Produce of 11 plays -		£ 1285	17 8
9,	Merch. of Venice	129	5	6
16,	*Provoked Huſband*	140	4	4
20,	Merch. of Venice	99	2	1
1777, Jan. 27,	King John -	147	18	8
31,	Roman Father	125	5	10
Feb. 3,	King John	118	5	7
7,	Macbeth	145	9	11
10,	Cato -	78	16	11
14,	Careleſs H. Benefit	156	15	10
24,	Macbeth	126	11	4
28,	King John	57	1	11
March 5,	Merch. of Venice	108	6	3
7,	Henry the Eighth	64	12	6
14,	Hamlet, Benefit	171	8	4
	Amount of 14 plays -		£ 1669	5 0
	Total amount of Sheridan's 25 nights		£ 2955	2 8

Thus

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Thus Mr. Sheridan, even in life's decline, and the no leſs declining ſtate of the Drama, unſupported as he was, in fourteen nights drew 683l. 19s. 1dh. or 48l. 10s. per night, more than in the ſame number of nights was produced by the united powers of Crow-ſtreet; in one of the moſt brilliant ſeaſons, according to theatric annals, ever known in Ireland. Should it be ſaid that the receipts of Mr. Sheridan's nights are enhanced by two benefits, it muſt be alſo obſerved that the other party had three, and thoſe Mr. Moſſop's, Mrs. Abington's, and the Freemaſons', with the ſuperaddition of a Command, to counter-balance them. Mr. Sheridan, on an average, acted to houſes of upwards of 118l. per night, by which he put about twenty-ſix guineas per night into his own purſe, excluſive of his benefits. The New Crow-ſtreet Luminaries, one night with another, computing on the whole, did not bring quite ſeventy-two pounds per night, which, rating any one of them on the ſame ſcale with Sheridan, or all of them ſucceſſively, at half the profits after fifty pound, with all their exertions and every other fortunate circumſtance combined, would not produce ten guineas per night to the individual.

Mr. Sheridan, however, who had incurred an enormous load of debt in his endeavours to reform and eſtabliſh the Dublin Theatre, was ruined in the firſt ſtage of the oppoſition, and his opponents did not long enjoy their triumph. After four years conſtant anxiety, fatigue and trouble, in the year 1762, Mr. Woodward returned to his native country with the loſs of the greateſt part of his fortune, obliged to begin the world again.* Barry held out a little longer; but in

* The ſummer ſeaſon enſuing Woodward came again to Dublin, and, in hopes of picking up a few guineas, joined the corps of Smock-alley; but though his firſt appearance was announced for a Public Charity, the good people of Dublin, offended at ſome unguarded expreſſions in his Prologue on his appearance in Drury-lane the winter before, would not ſuffer him to go on with his part. This at once put an end to his expectations in that country, from which he immediately departed, never more to return.

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In his avarice of conqueſt he had brought over a rod to whip himſelf, which, the ſeaſon after, took root, and for a time held up its head and flouriſhed in Smock-alley; the two houſes were again embroiled in competition, and violent were the contentions betwixt the Capulets and the Montagues.

At length, the ſuperiour genius of Moſſop prevailed. After ſeven years conteſt, Mr. Barry was obliged to reſign the field to his then ſeemingly more fortunate rival; having, during that time, experienced more chagrin, vexation, and diſappointment than imagination can well conceive. Haraſſed in mind and body, he had laviſhed ſo many years of the prime of his life, and inſtead, of reaping the fruits of ſuch ſhining abilities as Nature had bleſſed him with, had incurred debts he could never diſcharge, ruined many perſons connected with him, and involved himſelf in difficulties, which, during the remainder of his life, he could never ſurmount.

His, I cannot call him more ſucceſsful, competitor, was not in a much more enviable ſituation. His finances were alſo greatly deranged, his credit impaired, and his reſources nearly exhauſted. After a few years fruitleſs ſtruggle, his ſpirits ſunk under the preſſure of accumulated misfortunes; and a ſevere illneſs prevented his appearing on the ſtage. In this diſtreſſed ſituation, he was obliged to ſolicit the generoſity of the Public he had ſo often delighted, and a play was announced for his Benefit, in which he was not able to perform. The Benefit was fixed for the 17th of April, 1771, which, though the houſe was crowded, afforded him but a temporary relief. His affairs were ſo deſperate, it was next to an impoſſibility for any efforts to retrieve them, and in deſpair he relinquiſhed Crow-ſtreet to his rivals. He was ſoon after arreſted in London, and committed to the King's Bench; where, in ſpite of all the efforts of his friends, he was condemned to endure a long and ſevere confinement, and though he was at laſt liberated, various and inſurmount-

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able difficulties prevented his ever again diſplaying to the Public thoſe abilities that merited a better fate. Moſſop, in company with Edward Smith, of Jubilee, Eſq. his countryman and fellow collegian, after that made the tour of Europe; but neither change of climate, nor the conſolations of friendſhip, could *miniſter to a mind diſeaſed*, or *pluck from the memory a rooted ſorrow*. November 1773, in great poverty, at a miſerable lodging in Chelſea, he died of a broken heart.

The ſtories of Victor, and Sowdon, and Brown, and Dawſon, and Ryder,* ſucceſſively exhibit but a repetition of ſimilar

* Mr. RYDER'S father's name was *Prefwick Ryder*, an Iriſhman, and for ſome time a conſiderable Printer and Bookſeller in Dublin. He was obliged to abſcond on his printing an inflammatory pamphlet againſt Government, a Proclamation having been iſſued, and a Reward of One Thouſand Pounds offered, for apprehending him. He took on him the name of *Darby* (his wife's name) and for many years was an itinerant Comedian in England, where RYDER and his brother *Samuel* were born. RYDER played at Edinburgh and ſeveral towns in England by that name; but reſumed his real one ſome time before he came to this kingdom. The firſt and ſecond years of his management in Dublin, he met with great ſucceſs, and received vaſt ſums of money, excluſive of 3000l. he got in the Exchange Scheme, a Lottery grafted on a Dutch one. Notwithſtanding which, though no perſon ever could charge him with being an extravagant man, he, by the Viciſſitude of Time, and a Falling-off of Theatrical buſineſs, became bankrupt, and afterwards quit this for ſome years, and played in London, Edinburgh, &c. On his return to Dublin in 1791, he was in ſuch a ſtate of health, as required him to be in the country. The means were wanting. To ſupport a wife and four children alſo required the aſſiſtance of Friends. One of whom (the Printer of this Work) happy in an opportunity of any way contributing to the relief of an old and worthy Friend, had him removed to his houſe in *Sandymount*, near Dublin, where he was comfortably ſupported, and reſpectful attention paid to him by himſelf and his family; and at times, when every exertion has been made, and every nerve ſtrained, to rouſe him from deſpondence, and divert the ſenſe of affliction that preyed upon his mind, and under which he lamentably ſunk, he would ſigh heavily, and ſay, "Oh, MARCHBANK! they have broke my heart." On Saturday, November 27, 1791, he was releaſed from his troubles, and on the Wedneſday following he was buried in *Drumcondra* Church-yard, attended by many of his Friends, whoſe regard, alas! died with him;—no Monument or Grave-ſtone tells where his remains lie.

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similar ſcenes of embarraſſment and diſtreſs; who, in their turn, ſunk under the weight of calamity, and finiſhed, like Moſſop, a miſerable exiſtence in obſcurity and want. . . . .

Here is room for meditation. Fond, unthinking youth! be adviſed: truſt not the fallacious allurements of the ſtage; it is a wilderneſs of thorns and quickſands, which affords no reaſonable hopes of eſcaping; for, though a few who were native there, and to the manner born, may ſeem exceptions, it is indeed a comfortleſs ſituation for adventurers of a different claſs. The men whoſe cataſtrophe you have juſt peruſed, were moſt of them born to better proſpects, richly endowed by nature, of extraordinary talents, highly improved by education, and had attained to the ſummit of the profeſſion; yet diſappointment and miſery were their portion.

Upon the whole, in reſpect to the ſubject of our preſent enquiry, two inferences may be deduced:

1ſt. If Mr. Sheridan could have reconciled it to his principles of honour, and his prudence (bought by woeful experience) to run the riſk of involving himſelf, and the fortunes of his friends, in the conteſt; with his abilities, aided by the ſtrong ſupport of an excellent private character, he might poſſibly have poſtponed the evil day, and turned the tables on his adverſaries.

2d. The attempts of Dr. Johnſon to depreciate the talents and abilities of his good old friend, as handed down to poſterity by Boſwell, were unſupported by facts, and neither do honour to his judgment or his heart.

† p. 374. *Faulkner, whom he looked on, &c.* } The Writer of
‖ p. 384, *The paragraph told prettily, &c.* } the Memoirs of Mr. Sheridan's Life, given in the European Magazine, Anno 1788, informs his readers, that "The following Anecdote appeared in the Engliſh News-papers about the year 1768."

1768," and adds, " we give it on that authority, and in the very words, without vouching for the truth of it, though we believe it may be depended upon;—Laſt year Mr. Sheridan, the actor, obtained an Iriſh Act of Parliament, protecting him from arreſts on account of his debts in Dublin, amounting to ſixteen hundred pounds; and having this ſeaſon ſaved eight hundred pounds, he gave notice that he was ready to pay his creditors ten ſhillings in the pound, and deſired them to call on him for that purpoſe, with an account of their reſpective demands. Mr. Faulkner, the printer of one of the Dublin papers, was one of his creditors. This gentleman told Mr. Sheridan, that he would not trouble him with his demand till he dined with him: Mr. Sheridan accordingly called at Mr. Faulkner's; and after dinner Mr. Faulkner put a ſealed paper into his hand, which he told him contained his demand, at the ſame time requeſting Mr. Sheridan to examine it at his leiſure at home: when he came home he found, under ſeal, a bond of his for two hundred pounds, due to Mr. Faulkner, cancelled, together with a receipt in full of a book debt, to the extent of one hundred pounds.—Whether is the conduct of the actor or printer the more generous and laudable?

This paragraph contains a jumble of circumſtances ill underſtood, garniſhed with others that had no exiſtence but in the writer's imagination. . . . . At the cloſe of the ſeaſon, in May 1758, Mr. Sheridan went to London, to collect forces for the next Winter's campaign; but in the event of ſome adverſe occurrences, finding himſelf unable for the preſent to ſtem the tide of oppoſition, diſguſted with the ill-treatment of his fellow citizens, and weary of a profeſſion he never cordially reliſhed, he relinquiſhed the management of Smock-alley, and remained in England for the five ſucceeding years. During that interval he ſupported himſelf and family, whom at no time he neglected, in a ſtyle of genteel independence,

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independence,* chiefly by his literary exertions, and remitted to Mr. Sheen, his brother-in-law, in Dublin, about five hundred pounds, which was divided among such of his creditors as applied in consequence of an advertisement in the public papers several times repeated. In 1763, the Earl, afterwards Duke, of Northumberland, was appointed to the Government of Ireland. This, Mr. Sheridan, having the honour of being known to his Excellency, and still panting for his native home, considered as an auspicious event, and accordingly prepared for his return; on Saturday November the 5th, he arrived in Dublin, having first obtained a Letter of Licence from the majority of his creditors, in which it was stipulated, he should pay into Trustees' hands for their use, one half of whatever he should acquire, by acting or otherwise, during his stay there, with limitation for two years. Barry invited him to his house as his guest, where for a short time he took up his quarters, and, pursuant to agreement, the Friday following, November 11th, played Hamlet to 185l. 4s. 4d. which, sharing half the profits after 60l. as settled for each night of his performance, brought him 62l. 17s. 2d. for the first night. On the like conditions he

* "If this account should startle the belief of those who hunt after employments as their only resource, Mr. Sheridan begs leave to remind them that it was not his case; he had it in his power to provide for himself much better than the Government could. He had set out in life upon certain principles, early imbibed from his great master Swift, which would not suffer him to think of such a course. Among these, one of the foremost was independence; without which there could be no liberty. By independence he means only a reliance upon a man's self, and his own talents and labours, for his support and advancement in life; for absolute independence belongs not to human beings." .... "Though they who know not the value of such sort of independence, though they who know not how sweet the bread is which is earned by the sweat of one's own brow, may not have any faith in principles of this sort, yet surely they will give credit to a man upon their own favourite maxim, that of self-interest."

Sheridan's Humble Appeal to the Public, 8vo. 1758, p. 34.

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he continued performing till March, in all twenty-four nights, beſides benefits, and cleared upon the whole 863l. 1s. 10d.

The following is the liſt of plays, with Mr. Sheridan's dividend on each, reſpectively annexed.

Theatre Royal, Crow-Street.

1763,	Nov.	11, Hamlet -	62	17	2
		12, Ditto -	50	9	11
		17, Richard the Third	24	6	4½
		19, Ditto - -	24	0	11½
		21, Venice Preſerved	19	13	1½
		26, Jane Shore -	31	16	5½
		28, Venice Preſerved	7	17	7
	Dec.	8, All for Love -	11	12	10½
		10, Julius Cæſar -	39	16	9
		12, Hamlet -	94	10	4
		15, Othello -	27	16	9½
1764,	Jan.	9, Cato -	29	3	4
		12, Hamlet -	12	9	8
		14, Provoked Wife	0	14	10
		16, Richard the Third	12	15	7½
		21, Macbeth -	6	2	11
		23, Comus - -	13	15	8
		28, Ditto -	14	2	2
	Feb.	4, As you like it	3	16	10½
		15, Othello - -	19	15	11
		11, All for Love -	22	4	8
		13, King John -	6	18	7½
		16, Alexander -	18	5	0½
		20, Julius Cæſar -	4	10	5
To Mr. Sheridan for 24 nights			£ 559	14	1
Additional ſhares and benefits -			303	7	9
		Total -	£ 863	1	10

This,

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This, in his way of proceeding, was more to the immediate advantage of his creditors than his own; for though, on the expreſs condition of the letter of licence, he was obliged to hand over one half merely, 431l. 10s. 11d. for their uſe, by this exertion of his talents alone, they received 668l. 3s. 0d. reſerving to his ſeparate diſpoſal only 219l. 18s. 10d. The particulars of which appear in the following account, ſtated by Mr. Knowles, his brother-in-law and agent, which, with the original vouchers, on a former occaſion depoſited with my Father, are all now lying on my deſk.

Total receipt of Mr. Sheridan's ſhares and benefits, from Nov. 1763, to April 1764, incluſive					£ 863	1 10
Caſh paid to and for the uſe of Mr. Sheridan's creditors, viz.						
Nov. 17, To J. Watſon, as per receipt	120	0	0			
Dec. 14, To Mat. Williamſon, do.	30	0	0			
19, To Richard Cullen, do.	11	7	6			
30, To H. Mitchell, Eſq. do.	50	0	0			
To Tho. Adderly, Eſq. do.	50	5	2			
1764. To ſundry ſmall debts	21	10	4			
Mar. 22, To W. Lefanu, Eſq. truſtee for the creditors, at ſundries, as per his receipts	360	0	0			
					643	3 0
To Anth. Grayſon, Eſq's. attorney, advanced by Mr. Whyte	25	0	0			
	£ 668	3	0			
Balance remaining in Mr. Sheridan's hands					£ 219	18 10
Remitted to Mrs. Sheridan, per Mr. Benſon's draft on Meſſrs. Portis, London, for the uſe of his family, 100l. Engliſh					107	17 6
Balance reſerved for his own uſe					£ 112	1 4

May the 4th, 1764, JOHN KNOWLES.

Out

Out of this ſlender pittance he had to pay his lodgings, ſupport himſelf and his ſervant, and, on many occaſions, to provide dreſſes and other articles proper for his appearance on the ſtage; the Theatrical wardrobe at that time being in a reduced ſtate, and rather ſcantily ſuited. This at once refutes the idle notion of his extravagance, induſtriouſly propagated by his calumniators, and confidently aſſerted by many at this day. . . . . Several who had demands againſt him, as before intimated, refuſed to ſign the letter of licence, and as the artful and deſigning are never wanting in ſpecious pretexts, he truſted to their honour; but they lay perdue watching their opportunity, and the event proved the wiſdom of precaution on the part of Mr. Sheridan. While he continued playing, and was daily feeding his gaping creditors with gold, they ſuffered him to go on unmoleſted; but, notwithſtanding theſe unequivocal proofs of his integrity, immediately on the expiration of his agreement with Barry, which cloſed with a benefit, his quondam Printer, who held a bond of his, and had but lately received a very handſome partial payment, entered judgment; and without further reſpite, ordered execution.. My Father, fortunately, had the Sheriff's ſon then under his tuition, and through that channel got a hint of the buſineſs, which, having previouſly ſecured a paſſage in a veſſel for England, he imparted to Mr. Sheridan, and hurried him directly on board. He landed ſafely at Parkgate, on the laſt day of April 1764, and by this means, the humane deſign of arreſting him was fruſtrated.

According to the ſchedule, communicated to my Father by Mr. Knowles, together with other papers occaſionally cited, his debts amounted to 5687l. 18s. 7d. excluſive of the mortgage on Quilca, and ſome others which he could not accurately aſcertain, making in all upwards of 7000l. beſides intereſt.

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intereſt, contracted, not by extravagance and diſſipation, but, with corroding anxiety and inceſſant fatigue, in the ſervice of an ungrateful Public. The Iriſh Stage, before he, fatally for himſelf, engaged in the management, was a mere Bear-garden; by his unwearied exertions and abilities, it was raiſed to a degree of reſpectability and conſequence, that would have done honour to the moſt enlightened and poliſhed ages.* After maintaining his fruitleſs ſtruggles through a long ſeries of years, at laſt encountering thoſe baleful hydras, Faſhion and Caprice, his flattering hopes and all his ſhining proſpects were defeated. In 1759, with a growing family, for whoſe welfare he was ever ardently ſolicitous; with an impaired conſtitution and bankrupt in his fortune, he retired from the ſcene; and, as the Hiſtorian honourably teſtifies, "the laſt day of his management was, in every reſpect, as laudable and praiſe-worthy as the firſt."

M I have

* "The Stage indeed had long been in a declining condition. Salaries were badly paid; buſineſs totally neglected, while irregularity and indecorum pervaded the whole..... The appearance and ſucceſs of a new Actor produced ſometime after the moſt remarkable change ever known in the Theatrical affairs of Ireland..... We muſt not however imagine that all this was accompliſhed in a day. It was the work of years.—Perfection is only to be att ..d by perſeverance.... It may be naturally ſuppoſed that at firſt he had many difficulties to encounter. Bad habits, confirmed by time, were hard to be eradicated. Performers were unuſed to regularity, and the taſte of the town was palled and vitiated. Non-payment of ſalaries he knew was the radical ſource of diſorders; this, at the firſt ſetting off, and through the whole courſe of his management, he effectually obviated; and in other reſpects, his methods were ſo gentle, and at the ſame time ſo ſalutary, that they carried conviction with them. He always attended rehearſals, and ſettled the buſineſs of each ſcene with preciſion; not the moſt trifling incident preparatory to the performance was omitted.... His great judgment and perfect knowlege of his ſituation, amply qualified him for an inſtructor; and his regulations were ſo proper and conveyed in ſo pleaſing a manner, that they were irreſiſtible, and could not fail to be complied with. His higheſt ambition ſeemed to center in being conſidered the father of his company."

EXTRACT FROM HITCHCOCK.

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I have been the more particular in tracing the foregoing tranſactions, and quoting the original vouchers now before me, as it was on the ground of theſe facts the Petition to Parliament was framed on Mr. Sheridan's behalf, by which he became entitled to the benefit of an Act of Inſolvency, paſſed in the year 1766, while he was abſent with his family at Blois in France. To do juſtice, it muſt be alſo confeſſed, that the ſum of 360l. as above ſpecified, paid into the hands of the Truſtee for the Creditors, had not, when the application to Parliament was attempted, been diſtributed; owing to ſome difficulties in the buſineſs, which without Mr. Sheridan could not ſatisfactorily be adjuſted. However, upon the whole, the Creditors had no great reaſon to complain; Mr. Lefanu did not ſuffer the money to lie dormant, nor, as a Banker he might, apply it to his own profit. He laid it out in Debentures, and liquidating the intereſt with the principal, when the matters in diſpute were ſettled, honourably handed over to every man his ſhare, which was more than could well be expected, and ſo far a reaſonable compenſation for the delay; but in regard to the parliamentary buſineſs, it was a circumſtance, in the firſt ſtage, of untowardly aſpect, and if not cautiouſly guarded againſt, might have defeated the attempt. This the Petitioner was aware of, and therefore, not to incur a greater riſk, till the laſt moment concealed his deſign. That point being unexpectedly obtained, as our readers have before ſeen, Mr. Sheridan quitted France, where he had been deſerted by all his wealthy and proteſting friends,* whom his warm proſperity had graced; and was once more happily reſtored to his native land. He arrived in Dublin the latter end of October 1766, and on Monday, February 2d following, appeared at Crow-ſtreet in Hamlet,

* See his Letter, dated Blois, Auguſt 1ſt, 1766, in a preceding page annexed to the Remarks on Boſwell.

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Hamlet, and continued performing there for fourteen nights, with his uſual eclat, ending with Maſkwell in the Double Dealer, for his own benefit. That day, after dinner, he conſulted my Father, on the ſubject of calling a meeting of his Creditors, a point he had had ſometime in contemplation. My Father warmly oppoſed it; conceiving it likely to involve him in freſh embarraſſments, by exciting expectations which could not be gratified, and by implicated promiſes again endanger his perſonal ſafety, notwithſtanding the meaſures recently adopted; upon the whole, as favouring more of oſtentation, to which my Father was in all caſes particularly averſe, than any Good it could poſſibly produce. Perhaps his ſincere wiſhes for the real honour of Mr. Sheridan, co-inciding with a diſpoſition naturally zealous, made him over earneſt in his remonſtrances; ſome friends preſent not ſeeing, or in compliment to Mr. Sheridan, not chooſing to ſee the affair in the light my Father took it, over-ruled the arguments he offered, and confirmed Mr. Sheridan in his purpoſe; however, he acknowleged the propriety of being guarded; and on Tueſday, March the 24th, 1767, the following advertiſement appeared in Faulkner's Journal.

" Mr. Sheridan deſires to meet his Creditors at the Muſic-Hall, in Fiſhamble-ſtreet, on Thurſday the 2d of April, at One o'Clock, in order to concert with them the moſt ſpeedy and effectual method for diſpoſing of his effects and making a dividend."

The reſult of this meeting has been already ſet forth in the courſe of the Remarks, page 376. My Father attended, as Mr. Sheridan made it a point; but purpoſely delayed till the buſineſs of the congreſs was nearly ſettled, that he might not be called on for his opinion. Soon after his entrance, Mr. Sheridan, who was on the look-out, accoſted him, 'Sam! I am glad to ſee you are come;' ... my Father bowed.... 'I perceive you are not ſatisfied with the meaſure.'.... 'Indeed, Sir,

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Sir, I am not." . . . . Mr. Sheridan paused, and perhaps on reflection, when too late, was convinced he had taken a precipitate ſtep. A coolneſs ſucceeded between the two friends; this was fomented by the officiouſneſs of others, which occaſioned a diſunion of ſome continuance; but not the ſmalleſt appearance of animoſity or recrimination occurred on either ſide; their ſpirit was above it; on the contrary, many acts of kindneſs and mutual good offices took place in the interval, which ſhewed a wiſh for the reſtoration of amity on both ſides, if any one about them had been honeſt enough to promote it. My Father, ſtill bearing in mind the obligations he owed to Mrs. Sheridan, who was the friend and parent of his youth, continued, without abatement, his attachment to her children; they, on a proper occaſion, interpoſed; the parties were brought together, and their difference no more was remembered. It is to this difference between Mr. Sheridan and him, my Father alludes in his Elegy on the Inſtability of Affection, which ſtands the third in order in the New Edition of his Poems.

> One Friend, one choſen Friend, I once poſſeſs'd,
> And did I in the hour of trial fail?
> Still be his Virtues, his Deſerts confeſs'd;
> But o'er his lapſes, Memory, drop the Veil.
>
> WHYTE'S POEMS, p. 119.

The laſt office of kindneſs he had it in his power to render him, was at his lodgings in Frith-ſtreet, Soho. He ſupported him from his apartment down ſtairs, and helped him into the carriage that took him to Margate, where, the ninth day after, Death obliterated every thing—but his Virtues.

An obſervation or two more and we have done. . . . While Barry was ſtruggling againſt the ſtorm, which at laſt overwhelmed him, he gained, as already noted, Mr. Sheridan to his cauſe. The receipts of his firſt four houſes are ſtated by

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by Hitchcock,* by which the reader will be farther enabled to judge of the truth of the paragraph in queſtion; premiſing, on the ſame authority, that at this period the buſineſs in general was very bad, the rage being entirely for ſing-ſong and Smock-alley. Love in a Village at Crow-ſtreet, five times repeated, never reached 30l. ſometimes not 14l. other receipts have deſcended ſo low as 10l. Mr. Sheridan's firſt four nights as follows, viz.

1767, Feb. 2,	Hamlet	171	19	0
5,	Richard	113	15	0
9,	Cato	141	16	0
13,	Hamlet	148	9	5
Total receipt of Sheridan's four nights		£ 575	19	5

The

* This writer, though remarkably exact in what came within the compaſs of his reſearch, has been led into an error reſpecting Mr. Sheridan. He has adopted a notion, generally entertained, that Sheridan had the honour of being Preceptor to the Queen. Mr. Sheridan always contradicted it, and declared to the contrary. One day ſpeaking on the ſubject, he ſaid, "Our countrymen are fond of engroſſing imaginary diſtinctions; it is a trait in the national character. Some years ago, the ſign of Thamas Kouli Khan, Sophi of Perſia, ſtared you in the face in every corner of Dublin, and all mouths were filled with the Hiſtory and wonderful Exploits of that fortunate Uſurper, who, incredible as it may ſeem, was diſcovered to be nothing more or leſs, than an Iriſh Renegade, honeſt Tom Callaghan of the county of Cork, who, according to the creed of the day, by his uncommon feats of valour and addreſs, had raiſed himſelf to that dignity." . . . Angria, another diſtinguiſhed Freebooter of the Eaſt, in like manner, was notoriouſly a native of the Iſland of Saints; nay, I have known ſome who have a hundred times played marbles with him; 'a damned keen dog he always was, and the foremoſt in every miſchief.' On a recent occaſion, in a very reſpectable company, it was very ſeriouſly aſked, if Hyder Ali was not an Iriſhman. In a ſimilar ſtrain it was but lately aſſerted, that Dumourier, the French General's real name was Murray, formerly a private in the Iriſh Brigades. The O'Reillys, every child knows, are lineally deſcended from the Aurelii, a noble and imperial family of Ancient Rome.

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The other ten, including two Benefits, were in order—The Double Dealer, Ditto ſecond Night, Hamlet, The Double Dealer, Jane Shore, Double Dealer, Venice Preſerved, King John, Julius Cæſar, and on Friday March 20th, The Double Dealer, for his laſt Benefit. The particular receipts are not preſerved; but, as his novelty muſt have ſomewhat abated, we cannot preſume with altogether equal ſucceſs. Set down the entire upon an average at 130l. per night, by which with the addition of two Benefits, it may be admitted that he cleared 650l; no part of which, either by compact or implication, his Creditors had any claim to. He had his own neceſſities to provide for, and a young family with none but himſelf to look up to; their moſt excellent mother was no more; and the ſtate of his finances put it out of his power to indulge in works of ſupererogation.*

> The hearſe his wife's reſpected corſe that bore
> Left him poſſeſs'd of ſcarce one louis-d'or.
>
> WHYTE's POEMS, p. 22.†

No calculation can be made to ſupport the ſtory from the ſucceeding occurrences. Mr. Barry, notwithſtanding the extraordinary aſſiſtance he had derived from his union with Sheridan, ſoon after found himſelf obliged to reſign to his then more fortunate antagoniſt; but mindful of his late obligations to the man, whom his raſh oppoſition had formerly ſet adrift, in ſettling with Moſſop, he provided in the body of the Article for Sheridan's being engaged, which was certainly with a friendly and good intention on the part of Barry. Sheridan took it otherwiſe, and was ſo offended that any man ſhould preſume to carve for him, that he would accede to no offers, and did not appear that winter. In the month of April following, Sheridan and Moſſop accidently meeting at an

* See his Letter as before, dated Blois, Auguſt 1ſt, and alſo that of October 13th, 1766.

† Mirrour for Youth addicted to the Theatro-Mania, line 552.

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an entertainment given by a mutual friend, former bickerings were ſpeedily forgotten, and, reſentment giving place to convenience, the parties came to an agreement. Sheridan appeared a few days after in Hamlet, Richard and Cato ſucceſſively; but Moſſop declining a propoſal to unite their powers and appear together, the connection was diſſolved; and Sheridan, without taking a benefit, went off to England, to meet his young family on their return from France.

The amount of Mr. Sheridan's debts, as ſet forth in the paragraph under conſideration, widely differs from the return given in by Mr. Knowles, who, being ſome time treaſurer to the Theatre and Mr. Sheridan's agent, as well as married to his ſiſter, muſt have thoroughly known the ſituation of his affairs. The ſchedule was made out for my Father, ſuppoſing he might have occaſion for it, on his examination before the Committee of the Houſe of Commons, touching the particulars; a caſe which required circumſpection.

By this time our Readers muſt have perceived, from the very nature of the circumſtances, the authority of the paragraph was too haſtily admitted, and the flouriſh on liberality grounded on miſrepreſentation. If the Alderman had really acted in the manner deſcribed, it would have been no compliment to Sheridan; the compliment would have been to the Creditors, whoſe diſtributive ſhares would have been thereby proportionally augmented, as the Alderman's quota, ſo relinquiſhed, muſt have merged in the general fund. Conſequently, without detracting from the merits of Mr. Faulkner, and great merits he certainly poſſeſſed, on his part the eulogium was undeſerved, and we riſk nothing in aſſerting, that on the other it was equally undeſired. Sheridan had a conſciouſneſs of integrity and rectitude within, that ſupported

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ſupported him in every emergency through life; no praiſe was of any value in his eſtimation but what was honeſtly obtained. He realized in his conduct, to the fulleſt extent, the ſentiment contained in thoſe beautiful lines of Pope, which I have heard him, more than once, in his impreſſive manner, with pointed and peculiar energy recite:

> All fame is foreign, but of true deſert;
> Plays round the head, but comes not to the heart:
> One ſelf-approving hour whole years outweighs
> Of ſtupid ſtarers, and of loud huzzas;
> And more true joy Marcellus exil'd feels,
> Than Cæſar with a ſenate at his heels.
>
> ESSAY ON MAN, Ep. iv. l. 254.

JUNE 12TH, 1798.

THE

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ORIGINAL LETTERS,

&c. &c.

THE ſubſequent LETTERS, ſelected from a long courſe of epiſtolary correſpondence between Mr. and Mrs. SHERIDAN and my FATHER, eſtabliſh the Facts, in contradiction to Mr. Boſwell and others, ſet forth in our REMARKS on that Writer's voluminous MEMOIRS of the LIFE OF DR. JOHNSON, for which purpoſe the printing of them was chiefly intended. But, though few in number, they have recommendations which render them intrinſically valuable. They have the merit of being genuine, and written immediately to the occaſion, without the leaſt view to publication, which confeſſedly was not the caſe with moſt of the productions of our firſt-rate geniuſes in this way. Their compoſitions, under the name of Familiar Letters, however admirable in other reſpects, are rather Epiſtolary Eſſays, like the papers of the Spectators, the reſult of premeditation and care; ſcrupulouſly corrected and poliſhed for the preſs.* Here we have examples of familiar writing as it ſhould be, in its native ſimplicity and eaſe; every thought in its original

N conception

* We are told that a certain author of great learning and talents, uſed to employ a month in writing a letter of moderate length; and Pliny apologizes for the unuſual length of a letter, by ſaying, he had not time to make it ſhorter, which is a proof that he was not accuſtomed to ſet down his thoughts *currente calamo*, or without reſerve, to commit to his friends and poſterity, the genuine effuſions of his heart. Collections of Familiar Letters, are indeed numerous, by far the greateſt part made in the life time and printed under the inſpection of the authors. Mr. Addiſon has been known to ſuſpend buſineſs of high importance, and ſtop the preſs to alter a comma or reviſe a word.

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conception as it aroſe in the mind, ſpontaneouſly flowing from the pen. Truth is not ſacrificed to ornament, nor ſincerity diſguiſed in ſtudied periods. Several literary anecdotes contained in theſe Letters will probably be found intereſting; but they poſſeſs in an eminent degree an excellence for which Familiar Letters are eſteemed peculiarly valuable. They truly exhibit in pure unaffected language an undiſguiſed picture of the heart, and ſerve to illuſtrate the character of the Writers; Writers too who have meritoriouſly approved themſelves in the eye of the Public, and who muſt hereafter be diſtinguiſhed in the Hiſtory of Literature.

MRS. SHERIDAN* TO MR. WHYTE.

LONDON, Nov. 11th, 1758.

DEAR SAM,

I RECEIVED yours by the laſt Iriſh mail, and am much obliged to you for the notice you have given me in regard to the children. I ſhould indeed have fixed them with you entirely as Boarders on my leaving Ireland; but as I expected to have returned long before this time, I thought that for ſo ſhort a ſpace, and eſpecially as the exerciſe of walking in ſummer might be of uſe to them, that they could not be the worſe for ſpending their evenings at home. However, as I am convinced of the juſtneſs of your reflections on the ſubject, I would by all means have them lodged in your houſe, and the ſooner they are removed the better. Though I have an entire reliance as well on your care as that of Mrs. Whyte, yet I ſhould not chooſe, at this diſtance from myſelf, to have the

* This Lady is an exception to Mr. Boſwell's general rule; ſhe was a perſon Dr. Johnſon and He highly valued, and always ſpoke well of. See Memoirs of the Life of Johnſon, vol. i. pp. 352, 3, 4, paſſim. alſo Note on the preceding Remarks, p. 9.

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the children deprived of the ſervant they have been ſo long uſed to. I know it would be a great hardſhip on the poor younger one in particular to loſe nurſe who has always hitherto been their attendant.* They muſt neceſſarily have ſomebody

* In a work printed by Faulder, London, this preſent year 1798, it is ſaid, "Richard-Brinſley Sheridan, Eſq. was born at Quilca near Dublin, in the year 1752. At the age of ſix years his Father, then compelled to quit his native country, brought him into England, and placed him at Harrow School, under the care of Dr. Sumner, who was at that time Head-Maſter, &c." The ingenious author has been greatly miſled in almoſt every particular here advanced reſpecting Mr. Sheridan, as is evident, from the above Letters written by his Mother, and the circumſtances of his birth related in a preceding page which, to ſave the trouble of turning back, take briefly as follows. . . . Mr. Sheridan, the Father, at the time of his ſon's birth, and ſome years before and after, lived at No. 12 in Dorſet-ſtreet, Dublin; a new houſe built for him by a Mr. Orpin, now occupied by a Mr. Kindillon, directly oppoſite to the houſe in which Captain Solomon Whyte, Mrs. Sheridan's maternal uncle, then lived. The ſituation, though very inconvenient, being at a great diſtance from the Theatre, was fixed on at the ſpecial inſtance of her uncle, who was in a very declining ſtate of health, and wiſhed to have her near him; for ſhe was his favourite niece, and they were mutually fond of each other. It pleaſed the Almighty to call him to his eternal home, March the 17th, 1757. In this houſe Richard-Brinſley Sheridan was born, at a ſeaſon when his Father's occupation in town rendered his preſence indiſpenſably neceſſary, towards the latter end of October 1751; not in 1752, and conſequently not at Quilca, which is not near Dublin. Young Sheridan was not brought to London by his Father in the year 1758; but was ſent over late in the year 1759, and, not 'till after the Chriſtmas vacation, in the year 1762, was placed at Harrow School; for which we have the authority of the Letters before us. If any faſtidious critic ſhould carp at the nicety of this ſtatement, the circumſtances have been taken up by ſeveral writers in ſucceſſion, and all erroneouſly. It is nevertheleſs clear, that whatever is thought worthy of record, ſhould be honeſtly and truly recorded; if, in ſuch a caſe, ſo many miſtakes could be committed, it may at leaſt ſerve to ſhew our younger Readers, that when national vanity, the intereſt of individuals, or the prejudice of party, guides the author's pen, which is too much the caſe in both ancient and modern hiſtories, though written by a Hume or a Gibbon, they are at beſt but ingenious Romances, and not to be relied on.

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body to dreſs them, waſh for them, and mend their cloaths; and if nurſe can be made any otherwiſe uſeful in the family, I dare ſay ſhe will be very willing to do her beſt. I would have her ſtill attend them, and the terms for her can be as eaſily adjuſted as for the children. If you want a bed or beds on the occaſion, you may be ſupplied from the Blind-quay.

I can't at preſent inform you what ſtay we ſhall make here: Mr. Sheridan is now at Oxford, where he purpoſes to give a Courſe of Lectures; how long that will detain him I can't ſay; but I do not expect him to return this month. I ſent your letter to him and waited for his anſwer, otherwiſe you ſhould have heard from me ſooner. When he writes to Dr. Leland or Mr. Tickell, he will take notice of what you ſay in regard to H. S. mean time if that branch of inſtruction which they offered you can be in any wiſe made worth your while, I think you would not do well to refuſe it, as it may be a means of introducing you to ſomething much better. I only ſay this as my own ſentiments, for Mr. Sheridan did not give me his opinion on the ſubject.

As to Theatrical matters, I can ſay but little of them; but I doubt Mr. Sheridan, without a much better proſpect than the preſent, will hardly be induced to take the burthen again upon his ſhoulders; for my own part I think we have had a ſufficient proof how far Dublin is to be depended upon; I ſpeak in general, for I am ſure we have ſome very worthy friends there. Be that as it may, I can't as yet ſpeak with certainty concerning our deſignation after Chriſtmas. Mr. Sheridan's abſence (for I have had him but for a few days with me theſe five weeks, and then very much engaged) leaves me ignorant of what our motions are to be at that time; but I have hope I ſhall then have it in my power perſonally to thank you for your attention to my poor little

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ones. You don't tell me whether they are going on with their French. Give my bleſſing to them, and tell them we ſhall meet ere 'tis long.

Pray make my compliments to Mrs. Whyte: I hope ſhe has better health than when I ſaw her, and is by this time better reconciled to Ireland.

I am, Dear Sam,
Yours moſt ſincerely,
FRANCES SHERIDAN.

P. S. My Brother and Siſter are both very well, and wiſh to be affectionately remembered to you. Dr. Lucas, your old Friend, is perfectly recovered; he returned a few days ago from Harwich, where he had been on account of his health, and to attend Lord Charlemont, whom he has reſtored ſurprizingly. The Doctor was very particular in his enquiries about you, and requeſted I would aſſure you he has your welfare extremely at heart.

MRS. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

LONDON, MARCH 29TH, 1759.

DEAR SAM,

WHEN I look at the date of your laſt letter, I am aſhamed that I have not anſwered it long before now: I will however endeavour to account for my omiſſion in few words. When I received yours I was at Bath, where my drinking the waters, together with the general diſſipation of the place, quite diſqualified me either for writing or reading; to ſay the truth, I believe I never had either a pen or a book in my hand the whole time I was there; I ſhould notwithſtanding have written to you, but as I every day expected to have the buſineſs which detained Mr. Knowles concluded, ſo I intended by

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by him, at his return to Dublin, to have writ to you at large on the ſubject of your letter. This made me defer writing from day to day, when at my return to London, the ſickneſs and death of poor Miſs Pennington (who was in the ſame houſe with me) ſo took up my attention, that it was a great while before I could think of any thing elſe. This was the true ſtate of my ſituation, and I have nothing farther to offer in excuſe for my ſilence.*

The morning of the day in which our deceaſed friend took her illneſs, your name happening to be mentioned, ſhe aſked after you with great kindneſs, and told me many civilities which you had formerly ſhewn her. Yeſterday I opened a writing-box and a little parcel ſhe left me, in which I found ſome curioſities of value, and ſeveral intereſting papers, which ſhe had not before ſhewn me; among others, a very pretty Poem addreſſed to her by you it was encloſed in a letter of my ſiſter Chamberlaine's. We uſed to ſet you down in the liſt of her admirers. She was in every ſenſe indeed an eſtimable Being; a lively, ſenſible companion, and a ſincere and diſcreet friend; naturally affectionate and obliging, her good offices were never wanting where ſhe thought ſhe could be of ſervice. Books to be ſure are a great ſource of entertainment in the gloom of retirement; but the mind cannot be always in a diſpoſition for reading, and there are times and occaſions which require more active conſolation. Her agreeable converſation was the balm of my ſolitary hours, and her company in Mr. Sheridan's frequent abſences, to which his avocations

* Miſs P. was once an admired ſtar in the literary hemiſphere. Whether or not there be any writings of hers extant, I cannot aſcertain. The volume of well-written letters, containing an unfortunate Mother's Advice to her Abſent Daughter, ſuppoſed to be addreſſed to this Lady, was a Poſthumous Publication.

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avocations indiſpenſably oblige him, was to me a material acquiſition; my dear Sam, I ſhall miſs her very much; but this is ſelfiſh; don't condemn me for it.

Mr. Sheridan is now at Cambridge; but I expect his immediate return. I hope every thing goes on to your wiſhes. How are my dear little ones? do they often talk of me? keep me alive in their remembrance. I have all a mother's anxiety about them, and long to have them over with me; but I believe we ſhall not ſend for them till the latter end of June, and then I hope to ſee them. I mention this as a matter of buſineſs, as I know your number is limited, and, being apprized of our intentions in time, you may the better regulate your own meaſures and ſuit your convenience accordingly. If you will ſend me your account for the children, by nurſe, when they leave you, I hope Mr. Sheridan will diſcharge it the firſt opportunity. But as to the Bond Debt I can ſay nothing; that is a more ſerious object, and I fear we muſt treſpaſs on your friendſhip to wait ſometime longer, till our affairs come about, and we can get a better hold of the world.

The main object of your laſt, requiring maturer deliberation and preciſion, I muſt defer to a more favourable opportunity. Let me hear from you ſoon, and in my anſwer I promiſe to be particular and explicit on the points you propoſe. This is a ſad ſcrawl, very unfit to come before ſo excellent a penman; but I have neither time nor ſpirits to copy it fair: I hope you will be able to decypher it. Remember me to my brother and ſiſter in Kevin's-ſtreet. I ſhall be very glad to hear of your proſpering in your preſent and future undertakings; and am,

Dear Sam,

Your ſincere Friend, &c. &c.

FRANCES SHERIDAN.

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Mrs. SHERIDAN to Mr. WHYTE.

Windsor, September 12th, 1759.

Dear Sam,

MY Children are, thank God, arrived safe and well; they did not come down to me here till last Thursday; they staid a week in London, nurse being willing to wait for their baggage, which 'twas proper she should see safely lodged before she left town. I can't say they do their preceptor as much credit as George Cunningham does, for their progress has been rather small for eighteen months; but, mistake me not, I don't say this, as is too much the absurd custom of parents, by way of throwing a reflection on the teacher, of whose care and abilities I am perfectly satisfied; it is the interest of the master to do every thing to the best of his power for the advantage of his pupils; my children's backwardness I impute to themselves; owing to their natural slowness, their illness and long and frequent absences, not to any want of attention in you towards them.

Mr. Sheridan sends his best wishes to you, and is very much pleased to hear you are going on so well: he says, he is very sure you will make yourself conspicuous in your profession. I gave him your account, and he desires me to tell you, the instant it is in his power he will discharge as much of it as he can.

I believe you are not a stranger to the bad situation of our affairs in Ireland; he is here working his way through difficulties, and nothing but the prospect of having his labours crowned with success could support him under them; mean time as all our resources from your side are cut off, we are obliged to be oeconomists, till our affairs are settled upon a better footing, which we hope next winter will effect. I assure you, Sam, Mr. Sheridan laments the not having it in his

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his power at this diſtance to aſſiſt you in the manner he once hoped to do.

I am glad to hear you have recovered your health and ſpirits, and with them I hope your peace of mind. In truth I believe I have inverted the order of things here, and have placed the effects before their cauſe. Be that as it may, I wiſh them to you all together, with an additional acquiſition of reputation and fortune. There I think I have put matters to rights, and given the words their proper places; for according to the temporal order of things, in your way of life, money moſt aſſuredly waits on reputation.

Mr. Sheridan and I ſhall be glad to hear from you at your leiſure.

I am, Dear Sam,
Yours ſincerely, &c.
FRANCES SHERIDAN.

Mrs. SHERIDAN to Mr. WHYTE.

December 2d, 1759.

Dear Sam,

I OUGHT to make an apology for not anſwering yours of the 28th of Auguſt, if I had received it in any reaſonable time within the date; but it did not come to my hands till the 7th of November. Mrs. Gregory, indeed, very politely excuſed herſelf for this delay, occaſioned, as ſhe obligingly expreſſed herſelf, in the letter in which ſhe encloſed yours, by the deſire ſhe had to deliver your letter to me with her own hands, which ſhe was prevented from doing by illneſs, till the bad weather came on and cut off all hopes of being able to get out of town; for I am ſtill at Windſor.

I am extremely glad to hear from all hands that your ſchool goes on ſo well: I have not the leaſt doubt of your

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making a figure in your profeſſion. Indeed it is but a ſmall compliment to ſay this in the place where you now are; for I believe you have but few candidates for fame in your line; a moderate ſubſiſtence in the dog-trot way is all they expect or look for. Mr. Sheridan has gone a good way in the grammar; but as he only writes a little now and then, by ſnatches, as he is at preſent engaged in another courſe, which is to conſiſt of eight lectures, and which chiefly engroſſes his time and attention, he has not near completed the grammar; but, you may aſſure yourſelf, he will ſend it you, together with ſome other uſeful hints, as ſoon as it is perfect enough to be of uſe to you. He is very much obliged to you for your friendly behaviour, and it redoubles his concern at not having it yet in his power to acquit himſelf towards you as he thinks you deſerve. But as you cannot be a ſtranger to the ruinous ſtate of our affairs on your ſide the water, ſo you may imagine thoſe events muſt, in ſome meaſure, even influence the progreſs of matters here; however, Mr. Sheridan is determined to perſevere in what he thinks a right path, and I truſt in God we ſhall ſucceed in the end.

The two boys are getting on in their learning, and I endeavour to aſſiſt them, particularly in the Engliſh branches, as well as I can. I ſhould often be at a loſs what to do with my time in this unſociable place, if I had not the children, with whom I find ſufficient employment. We don't think of ſeeing London till after Chriſtmas.

Mr. Sheridan ſends his beſt wiſhes to you; the children their love.

I am, Dear Sam,

Yours moſt truly,

FRANCES SHERIDAN.

Mrs.

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Mrs. SHERIDAN to Mr. WHYTE.

Windsor, March 21st, 1760.

Dear Sam,

THOUGH your laſt letter was without date, I am ſure it has been long enough written to make me aſhamed of not having anſwered it before; if I were not conſcious that it was really not in my power to do it ſooner. At the time I received it Mr. Sheridan was in London, and he had not been at home long enough, to give me an opportunity to talk to him about the requeſt you made, before I was obliged to go thither on particular buſineſs, which detained me ten days. Since my return to Windſor, which is now a fortnight, I have ſcarce been a day well. A diſorder at my ſtomach, attended with violent head achs, peſters me perpetually, and diſqualifies me almoſt for every thing; but particularly for writing.

Mr. Sheridan told me, on ſeeing your letter, that he would with great pleaſure undertake the taſk you mentioned; but to do any thing that would be of material uſe to you, would take up a much longer time than you are aware of; he ſays, thoſe very things you ſpoke of, would be at leaſt a month's work to him, to do in ſuch a manner as would be of any benefit to you; however, that would not deter him, if his time, the only thing he now can call his own, were not at this juncture extremely precious to him. This is not occaſioned through want of leiſure, as here he can have but few avocations; but his health is ſo precarious, having lately been violently attacked with his old diſorder, that he is obliged to lay hold of every interval of eaſe, to purſue a very arduous taſk which he has ſet about. His Lectures are finiſhed; but were not done time enough to give them in London, as he intended. He is now engaged in a very extenſive plan, in which the Engliſh Language will be ſet in a light,

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light, that few think it capable of receiving. I could heartily wiſh, that you were within reach, that he might communicate his labours to you. You, who have ſo much conſidered it yourſelf, muſt receive a particular pleaſure from what he could ſhew you on the ſubject, as he often ſpeaks of your indefatigable enquiries, and commendable curioſity on this occaſion. He has aſſured me that you ſhall be the firſt to whom he will communicate what he has written, as ſoon as it is in a form fit for an advantageous peruſal; how ſoon this will be I can't pretend to ſay; I can only anſwer for my not failing to remind him of you, though I am ſure his own inclinations would lead him to ſerve you more materially than in this point were it in his power. The time I hope will come; for we have had a ſufficient ſhare of diſappointments; patience, courage and induſtry, however, will ſurmount every thing.

In a former Letter I wrote to you, I mentioned two things you quite forgot in your anſwer. The one was, the Letter I ſent to Mrs. Katherns, which I ſhould have been glad to know if ſhe received; the other was the enquiries after the poor little family of Mr. Fiſh;* the account I have ſince had of his death has been a melancholy anſwer to thoſe.

You told me you would let me know *under ſeal of ſecrecy*, why a certain perſon interfered ſo warmly about Mrs. ——. I ſhould be glad you would explain this. I aſſure you your information ſhall be a ſecret, except to Mr. Sheridan, to whom I believe you would impart it as ſoon as to me. A ſecret delivered to me, *viva voce*, might be lodged ſafely within my own breaſt; but thoſe communicated by Letter hazard a participation, as I have no correſpondence that I don't ſhew. I only mention this, that, in caſe you would wiſh nobody to know

* The Rev. Mr. John Fiſh, M. A. Chaplain to the Blue-coat Hoſpital, married to her elder ſiſter, Ann, deceaſed; there were but the two Siſters.

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know of what you have to ſay but myſelf, you need not write it.

Mr. Sheridan and the children all deſire to be cordially remembered to you.

I am, Dear Sam,

Yours ſincerely,

FRANCES SHERIDAN.

Mrs. SHERIDAN to Mr. WHYTE.

London, February 26th, 1761.

Dear Sam,

CONSIDERING I am not remarkable for my expedition in anſwering letters, I think I need not make any apology for not acknowleging the receipt of yours of December 20th, ſooner.

I ſhall juſt briefly diſpatch the contents of that, having matters of more conſequence to ſpeak to.

I need not tell you how ſincerely glad both Mr. Sheridan and I are at every ſucceſs and every freſh mark of approbation you meet with; I think Nature cut you out for the profeſſion, and I can have no doubt but your own induſtry and application have made large improvements on her handy-work. I am gratified to hear that you expect to have the children of families of ſo much reſpectability and conſequence as thoſe you mention; this muſt needs give an eclat to your ſchool, if you yourſelf was leſs qualified than I am ſure you are for the important taſk of education.

Perhaps you were 'more nice than wiſe' in burning your Engliſh Grammars; it ſhews however a diffidence very commendable at your years. Mr. Sheridan will be extremely glad to ſee what you intend by the advice of your friends to publiſh,

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publiſh, when an opportunity offers. I hope you will ſend it to him, and he flatters himſelf that *advice* will not be the only thing that he will ſoon have it in his power to ſend you.

He ſtands here in high reputation, with a proſpect of being every day more and more eſteemed. The late King's death, which ſhut up the Theatres for a time, together with the neceſſity the Managers were under of bringing on the ſtage five new pieces (Farces and Comedies) has prevented him appearing ſo often as it was expected; this, however, tho' it has a little curtailed his profit, has been no hindrance to his reputation, which ſtands very high in all the parts he has been ſeen in. He is now preparing for another courſe of Practical Lectures, which he intends to read and then to publiſh. I could wiſh diſtance did not render communication ſo inconvenient, as I am ſure you might be benefited by ſome lights from him.

He has as yet been immerſed in too great a variety of buſineſs (not to mention private vexations) to be able to put the finiſhing hand to what I purpoſed ſending to you.

As for myſelf you will ſee how my ſolitary hours were employed laſt winter at Windſor, if you have time enough to beſtow the reading on the Memoirs of Miſs Sidney Bidulph, which will ſoon be publiſhed by G. Faulkner.

I had this day an interview with Mrs. Gardiner, requeſted by her laſt night by an exceedingly urgent note. The converſation was long and intereſting, in which, though I could perceive ſtrong prejudices and great partiality in her own favour, ſhe threw much blame on you. I cannot now enter into particulars; but hereafter, when I am leſs expoſed to interruptions, will give you my beſt opinion and advice upon the ſubject. I own her viſit was not attended with the conſequences which I looked for. What have you done with your two Tragedies? I expected Mrs. Gardiner would have brought

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brought them with her, and apprized Mr. Sheridan on the ſubject. He ſays, he will anſwer for having one of them performed, and will not only undertake the part you wrote for him; but will take care the whole ſhall be advantageouſly caſt and prepared for repreſentation. A friend of yours has already ſketched out an Epilogue, and I have been promiſed a Prologue by another; ſo far matters are in train as to that; but the other, Mr. Sheridan fears, from the account I gave him, will not do for the ſtage: he thinks the ſubject unfit for repreſentation, and too like the ſtory of Oedipus.*

I muſt ſtop here or loſe the opportunity of ſending you this by the preſent conveyance. I am, in the Mercantile Style, for Self and Company,

Dear Sam,

Sincerely yours,

FRANCES SHERIDAN.

Mrs.

* This kind and flattering offer came too late. Both the Tragedies, ſharing the ſame fate with the Grammars, having been committed to the flames. . . . The firſt of them was the ſtory of Abradatas and Panthea, taken from the 5th Book of Xenophon's Cyropædia. The other was taken from an anonymous pamphlet printed by Geo. Faulkner, 1751, entitled "ELEONORA, or a Tragical and True Caſe of Inceſt," reported by the author, who declares he intimately knew and was in confidence with the parties, to have happened in the North of Scotland, Anno 1685. It is preciſely the ſame ſtory, with ſome local variations, on which Mr. Walpole founded his Tragedy of the Myſterious Mother. The Right Hon. Author of that piece, though he lays the ſcene at Narbonne in France, gives us to underſtand, on the authority alledged of Archbiſhop Tillotſon, that it was a matter of fact well known in England, and ſeveral writers are mentioned, who before him had hit upon the ſubject; but there is no notice taken of a book prior to any of them, where we have ſince diſcovered it, and there it is ſtated that the crime was perpetrated on the Continent. Biſhop Taylor, in his Ductor Dubitantium, 1659, book i. chap. iii. ſect. 3d, cites this identical ſtory, from Comitolus, as of a ſtrange and rare caſe happening at Venice, propoſed for the determination of a congregation of learned and prudent perſons; we muſt ſuppoſe of Divines. Here are three Authors, whoſe credentials it might be raſh to call

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Mrs. SHERIDAN to Mr. WHYTE.

London, February 25th, 1762.

Dear Sam,

IT is so long since you and I have corresponded that I really do not recollect whether you are a letter in my debt or I in yours; for my own credit's sake I wish it may be the former; but be it as it may I will not omit the opportunity of Mr. Rainsford's return, to send you Mr. Sheridan's Dissertation, which includes part of his plan. 'Tis addressed, as you see, to a great man; when you read it you will not be at a loss to discover, that the person addressed is our present first Minister. It has been as well received by him as we could possibly wish, and even beyond the expectation of our friends. He expressed himself highly pleased with the design, and sent Mr. Sheridan word it should receive all countenance and encouragement. Lord Bute is a man of his word, and every body knows his great influence, so that the affair now seems likely to become of great importance. The Course of Lectures which Mr. Sheridan is now reading in the city is attended in a manner that shews the people more warm and earnest on the subject than can well be conceived; his auditory seldom consisting of less than five hundred people, and this is the utmost the hall will contain; many have been disappointed for want of room, and he is strenuously solicited to repeat the Course again immediately in the same place.

call in question; one says Scotland; another, England; a third Venice, and, a fourth, not yet quoted, pleads an alibi, and fixes, beyond doubt, the real Scene of action at Prague, in Bohemia: O, the faith of historians! credit the enormous tale who will, I'd as soon believe that Romulus and Remus were nursed by a wolfe. The plain inference to be drawn is, for the honour of human nature, no such thing ever happened; but that the whole is merely a fiction of casuists, as a basis to support an opinion.

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place.* This I believe he will comply with, though he is to give another Courſe next month at Spring-Gardens. Laſt Monday evening Charles for the firſt time exhibited himſelf as a little orator. He read Eve's Speech to Adam from Milton, beginning "O thou! for whom, and from whom I was form'd," &c. as his Father had taken a deal of pains with him, and he has the advantage of a fine ear and a fine voice, he acquitted himſelf in ſuch a manner as aſtoniſhed every body.... He purpoſes in his next Courſe to ſhew him in all the variety of ſtyle that is uſed in Engliſh compoſition, and hopes in a very little time to make him complete in his own art. Dick has been at Harrow School ſince Chriſtmas;† as he probably may fall into a buſtling life, we have a mind to accuſtom him early to ſhift for himſelf; Charles's domeſtic and ſedentary turn is beſt ſuited to a home education * * * * this is the preſent ſyſtem of your little old acquaintance.

I ſhall be glad of your opinion on the Diſſertation, as alſo to know what progreſs you yourſelf have made in this particular branch in your ſchool, which I am very glad to hear by Mr. Rainsford is in great reputation. I am obliged to break off, as I have been interrupted a dozen times ſince I ſat down to write. Indeed I am ſo diſtreſſed for want of a room to myſelf, that it diſcourages me from attempting any

 thing,

* Mr. Sheridan admitted in print that to three Courſes he had upwards of ſixteen hundred ſubſcribers at a guinea each, beſides occaſional auditors, and the benefit ariſing to him afterwards from the publication of the Lectures, (price half-a-guinea in boards) which had a rapid ſale, ſo that his emolument on the whole muſt have been conſiderable indeed.

† This account (February 25th, 1762) little accredits the information of thoſe who place Richard-Briniley Sheridan at Harrow-School in the year 1758, as noticed in the preceding pages.

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thing, though I have this winter made a ſhift to ſcribble ſomething that you ſhall hear of another time.

Adieu, Dear Sam,

I am yours ſincerely,

FRANCES SHERIDAN.

P. S. My ſiſter Chamberlaine deſires me to inform you (you may be aſſured I did not hint the ſubject) that ſhe had paid Mrs. ..... ſome money that you had *left in 'ber hands for that uſe*, which ſhe expects you'll acquit her of. I leave my brother Dick to anſwer for himſelf.

MRS. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

LONDON, MARCH 30TH, 1762.

DEAR SAM,

I HOPE you have long before this received my letter, together with the packet which I ſent you by the hands of Mr. Rainsford, and that I have made my peace with you on account of my long ſilence.

I ſhould have anſwered yours of the 16th paſt, immediately, but that I waited in hopes of being able to give you ſome ſatisfactory account of your friend Mr. Armſtrong, and am very glad to inform you, that I happened to have intereſt enough with a very worthy gentleman to get him a ſmall employment, which he has thought worth his acceptance. Upon my firſt application to this gentleman (which was directly on the receipt of your letter) he told me he had nothing then in his power; but that I might depend on him when any thing offered. I then got my Brother to write to Mr. Adair, who returned the ſame anſwer, and I was afraid the young man might have continued here a long time without ſucceeding, when my friend, Commiſſioner Tom, came himſelf to tell me he had a place worth ſixty pounds a year,

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year, and apartments, &c. with it. I underſtood from him that he had a mind to go abroad; but as nothing eligible was to be procured in that way, I thought that this might be better than nothing. I writ to him, and deſired him to wait on Commiſſioner Tom. He did ſo, and Mr. Tom has ſince informed me that he accepted of the place, and purpoſed going down to Portſmouth, where he is ſtationed; but I have not yet ſeen him, though it is now above a week ſince this affair was ſettled, which I am the more ſurpriſed at, as I requeſted he would call on me. I ſuppoſe he will call on me before he leaves town (if he be not gone;) but as this looks a little remiſs, I have been the more particular in my account to you, leſt he ſhould have neglected writing to you.

Mr. Sheridan is much obliged to you for the great delicacy with which you make your application, in giving it the air rather of requeſting a favour than making a juſt demand. Few people, Sam, can *think*, much leſs act, generouſly, or even genteelly. He will not fail to ſend you the ſum mentioned in about a month's time at fartheſt. Indeed he could have wiſhed you had been leſs modeſt on this occaſion, and put in your claim with the reſt of the creditors, who, you I believe muſt know, have already received each a dividend by the hands of Mr. Sheen. I hope another year or ſo will ſet him clear, and that he will then be able to enjoy the fruits of his labour, which hitherto has not been the caſe. He has had but very indifferent health all the winter; but is now, thank God, much better. He purpoſes going through a new Courſe of Lectures in the middle of April, and will give them alternately in the city, and at the court end of the town. You know the inhabitants of thoſe two quarters are as diſtinct as if they were in two different countries.

I ſhould be glad to know how you like the Diſſertation and the Addreſs to Lord Bute. I believe I told you in my laſt that

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that he had received it very well, and promiſed the plan all countenance and encouragement.

Mr. Sheridan and the little ones deſire to be remembered cordially to you. Mrs. Chamberlaine has been extremely ill and does not yet leave her room; my brother is very well.

I am, Dear Sam,
Moſt ſincerely yours, &c.
FRANCES SHERIDAN.

P. S. Not finding myſelf worth a frank when I came to fold up this letter, I poſtponed ſending it till this day, April 1ſt. . . . . No news of Mr. Armſtrong!

MRS. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

LONDON, MAY 31ST, 1759.

DEAR SAM,

THOUGH my laſt Letter to you is unanſwered, I think myſelf obliged to write to you again, and ſhould indeed have done it much ſooner, if a tedious indiſpoſition had not confined me to my room, (and part of the time to my bed) for three weeks: It was the epidemical diſorder which, we hear, was all over Europe, and in which I ſhared very ſeverely.

When I laſt wrote to you, I, in Mr. Sheridan's name, promiſed to anſwer the requeſt, which you in ſo kind and modeſt a manner, but juſt propoſed; on which account it redoubles both Mr. Sheridan's and my uneaſineſs that we cannot keep our word. I ſhall however reap this one advantage from the concern I have felt on this occaſion, that it will teach me for the future never to make a promiſe, the power of fulfilling which depends upon contingencies. When I writ laſt, which was, I think, in March, Mr. Sheridan then propoſed

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propoſed giving another Courſe of Lectures in April in London, after which he had a proſpect (which then appeared a certainty) of receiving conſiderable advantages from a journey to Scotland, which was to have taken place before this time. But in both theſe deſigns he has been diſappointed. In regard to the firſt, having left ſome printing work to be done, which was neceſſary previous to the new Courſe of Lectures to be delivered here, he went out of town for a fortnight, all which time was loſt; for on his return he found nothing done of the preparatory buſineſs; this having put him back a good deal, by the time he had got in readineſs, the illneſs which I have mentioned ſeized on him, and though his laſted but a few days, yet the complaint ſo univerſally prevailed all over London, that for a time public entertainments were but little attended, and the fine weather advancing reduced the number of his auditors ſo much, many going out of town who would have been of the number, that he found it would by no means anſwer his purpoſe to read a third Courſe; ſo that all hopes of advantage from that were cut off at once. In regard to his Scotch journey, the many reaſons which deterred him from that, would be too long to tell you; but he found they had been ſo dilatory in his abſence, and ſo much departed from the original plan laid down by him, through the ignorance or officiouſneſs of ſome who had got ſome ſhare of the conduct of it, that he was adviſed by his principal friends there, not to be concerned with them, till they had put matters upon a better footing; and as he found it would be difficult and troubleſome to effect his chief deſign (that of the Academy) this year, he thought a viſit, merely for his own advantage, would not at this juncture appear well to them, and therefore he dropt all thoughts of it. I believe I need not tell you, that theſe two diſappointments have a good deal diſtreſſed us; eſpecially as he was to make a payment

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a payment to his creditors in Dublin this very month. However uneaſy it may make a man not to have it in his power to diſcharge creditors from whom he has no reaſon to expect indulgences, I aſſure you it makes me infinitely more unhappy to diſappoint one whoſe good natured forbearance I have already experienced, and from whoſe friendſhip I have no diſagreeable conſequences to apprehend. Mr. Sheridan is however ſtill not without hopes of being able in leſs than a month, to diſcharge ſome part of his load, and if HE is not again diſappointed, YOU ſhall not.

Mr. Sheridan's laſt Courſe of Lectures are now printing; as ſoon as they are ready he will ſend you over the book. We ſhall ſoon go ſome where out of the noiſe and duſt of London, and Mr. Sheridan will employ himſelf this ſummer in writing his Engliſh Dictionary, which we have reaſon to hope will be a ſucceſsful work.

I am, Dear Sam,

Yours moſt ſincerely,

FRANCES SHERIDAN.

The children ſend their love to you.

MRS. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 29TH, 1762.

DEAR SAM,

IT was not in *revenge* that I did not anſwer yours of the 2d of October ſooner. The truth is, ſince my return to town from Windſor, I have been much employed though often interrupted by intervals of bad health, which of late have frequently returned on me. I have however muſtered up ſpirits enough to write ...., what do you think? Why, a Comedy! which is now in rehearſal at Drury-lane. I had formed my plan, and nearly finiſhed the ſcenes laſt ſummer at Windſor (the place of my inſpiration,) when I came to town, and

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and ſhewed it to a few people; what was ſaid to me on the occaſion encouraged me to take ſome pains in the finiſhing of it. Mr. Garrick was preſſing to ſee it, and accordingly I read it to him myſelf. What his opinion of it is, you may judge by his immediately requeſting it to be put into his hands, and undertaking to play the *ſecond* character, a comic, and very original one.* Mr. Sheridan is to play the firſt, one of a graver caſt, and a great deal of variety, and which requires a conſiderable actor to perform. My firſt theatrical eſſay has ſo far met with an almoſt unprecedented ſucceſs; moſt of *us*, poor authors, find a difficulty in getting our pieces on the ſtage, and perhaps are obliged to dangle after Managers a ſeaſon or two: I on the contrary was ſolicited to give mine as ſoon as it was ſeen. It is to come out early in January (the beſt part of the winter) and as it is admirably well caſt, I have tolerable expectations of its ſucceeding.

Mr. Sheridan has written to Mr. Sheen, to give you one of his books which he will ſoon receive from hence. He is now, as I mentioned to you formerly, buſied in the Engliſh Dictionary, which he is encouraged to purſue with the more alacrity, as his Majeſty has vouchſafed him ſuch a mark of Royal Favour. I ſuppoſe you muſt have heard, that he has granted him a penſion of two hundred pounds a year, merely as an encouragement to his undertaking, and this without ſolicitation, which makes it the more valuable.†

He

* See the Note annexed at the end of this Letter.

† Mr. Boſwell, always ready to detract from Mr. Sheridan, and edge in a compliment to Johnſon at another's expence, contrives to give an invidious twiſt to this mark of Royal Favour, ſtating, as noticed in our Remarks, that, "Mr. Sheridan's Penſion was granted to him as a ſufferer in the cauſe of Government," which this account of Mrs. Sheridan's, confirmed by the printed addreſs to Lord Bute, clearly refutes, and ſhews Mr. Boſwell was greatly miſinformed, or wilfully deviates from the truth.

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He intends giving a new Courſe of Lectures in March; the preparing of which, together with his getting ready in the Comedy, (his part being a very long one) will fully take up his time the remainder of the winter; whatever hours he can make beſide muſt be employed in the Dictionary, as he does not purpoſe playing any other characters; nor would he have appeared at all this ſeaſon, if my play could have been got up well without him, as he has been far from being well theſe two months paſt.

I know not whether Mr. Armſtrong ever gave you any account of himſelf. The circumſtance which I mentioned to you he afterwards cleared up, in a way which was not at that time ſatisfactory either to me or himſelf; however it is now over; a *failure* on his ſide occaſioned his loſing the little place which was ready for his acceptance; but this, as he begged of me not to mention, I charge you never to take notice of it, to any of his friends: Perhaps he has done better; for on his miſſing that, I got him ſo well recommended, that he was ſent with the army to Portugal in a very good ſtation, where I ſuppoſe he now is.

Your former little pupils are all very well, and ſend their love to you. Mr. Sheridan joins me in wiſhing you all ſucceſs.

I am, Dear Sam,

Yours ſincerely,

FRANCES SHERIDAN.

Mrs.

* *Mr. Garrick was preſſing to ſee it*, &c. See page preceding..... This behaviour of Garrick does him infinite honour; but the particular compliment to Mrs. Sheridan, as a writer, in her modeſt way of relating it, does not appear in its full force; which is greatly heightened by the conſideration, that at the time Sheridan and he were upon very unfriendly terms. Davies on the ſubject ſays .... "Notwithſtanding it was become impoſſible to adjuſt differences between the Manager and Mr. Sheridan, in ſuch a manner as to bring them on the ſame ſtage, and upon the uſual terms of acting, yet when Mrs. Sheridan's Comedy of the Diſcovery

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Mrs. SHERIDAN to Mr. WHYTE.

London, May 12th, 1764.

Dear Sam,

I RECEIVED yours by the hands of Mr. Sheridan, whoſe ſudden arrival not a little ſurpriſed me. Though I cannot plead guilty to the charge of not anſwering your letters; yet I do not really well know how to defend myſelf; for I cannot take upon me to aſſert, merely from memory, that I anſwered *all* your letters; but can venture to ſay, from the general tenour of my conduct, that I am ſure it is impoſſible, that I could have received ſo many from you without anſwering them. *One* letter I know I was in your debt when Mr. Sheridan went over, which I commiſſioned him to anſwer perſonally, and if, as you ſay, you had written three before that, I either did not get them, or you did not get my anſwers. But to have done with juſtifications (which between friends are always beſt when ſhorteſt) I am extremely glad to hear you are eſtabliſhed ſo advantageouſly, with ſo good a character, which I have no doubt you deſerve, and with ſuch deſirable proſ-

Diſcovery was offered to Mr. Garrick, he accepted it, and conſented that Mr. Sheridan ſhould play the principal part in the play, and receive for his labour the advantage of two nights' profits, beſides thoſe for the Author. . . . He was indeed ſo warm in behalf of the Diſcovery, that he aſſured a Publiſher, who afterwards bought a ſhare in it, that it was one of the beſt Comedies he ever read, and that he could not do better than to lay out his money in ſo valuable a purchaſe." . . . Memoirs of Garrick as before, vol. i. p. 310.

Obſerve, my young Readers! what a difference in concluſions a few words may create. Here are two writers, without the ſmalleſt intention to miſlead, perfectly agreed in the principal point, yet by a ſmall variation of phraſe, throwing a quite different light on the acceſſories. Mr. Davies, in the uſual routine of his profeſſion, gives Mr. Garrick the credit of accepting the Comedy, purely as a matter of favour. Mrs. Sheridan, on the contrary, more naturally from her feelings on the occaſion, without aſſuming to herſelf any extraordinary airs of merit, in pure ſimplicity of heart, aſcribes the compliment to his judgment, and the probable expectations of ſucceſs. And that this is the proper and true conſtruction to be put upon it, Mr. Garrick's ſubſequent converſation with the publiſher abundantly evinces.

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pects before you. Mr. Sheridan expreſſes himſelf much obliged to you for your friendſhip; for which you have my warmeſt acknowlegements.

And now, Sam, not by way of compenſation, for that is not in my power to make you; but as a ſort of little regale in your own way, for want of other matter, I will ſend you the reſult of a morning's meditation.

ODE TO PATIENCE.

Unaw'd by threats, unmov'd by force,
My ſteady Soul purſues her courſe,
Collected, calm, reſign'd;
Say, you who ſearch with curious eyes
The ſource whence human actions riſe,
Say, whence this turn of mind?

'Tis Patience.... Lenient Goddeſs, hail!
Oh! let thy votary's vows prevail,
Thy threaten'd flight to ſtay;
Long haſt thou been a welcome gueſt,
Long reign'd an inmate in this breaſt,
And rul'd with gentle ſway.

Thro' all the various turns of fate,
Ordain'd me in each ſeveral ſtate,
My wayward lot has known;
What taught me ſilently to bear,
To curb the ſigh, to check the tear,
When ſorrow weigh'd me down?

'Twas Patience.... Temperate Goddeſs, ſtay!
For ſtill thy dictates I obey,
Nor yield to Paſſion's Power;
Tho' by injurious foes borne down,
My fame, my toil, my hopes o'erthrown,
In one ill-fated hour.

When

When robb'd of what I held moſt dear,
My hands adorn'd the mournful bier
Of her I lov'd ſo well;
What, when mute ſorrow chain'd my tongue,
As o'er the ſable hearſe I hung,
Forbade the tide to ſwell?

'Twas Patience! . . . Goddeſs ever calm!
Oh! pour into my breaſt thy balm,
That antidote to pain;
Which flowing from thy nectar'd urn,
By chymiſtry divine can turn
Our loſſes into gain.

When ſick and languiſhing in bed,
Sleep from my reſtleſs couch had fled,
(Sleep, which even pain beguiles,)
What taught me calmly to ſuſtain
A feveriſh being rack'd with pain,
And dreſs'd my looks in ſmiles?

'Twas Patience! . . . Heaven-deſcended Maid!
Implor'd, flew ſwiftly to my aid,
And lent her foſtering breaſt;
Watch'd my ſad hours with parent care,
Repell'd the approaches of deſpair,
And ſooth'd my ſoul to reſt.

Say, when diſſever'd from his ſide,
My friend, protector, and my guide,
When my prophetic ſoul,
Anticipating all the ſtorm,
Saw danger in its direſt form,
What could my fears controul?

'Twas

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'Twas Patience! . . . Gentle Goddeſs, hear!
Be ever to thy ſuppliant near,
Nor let one murmur riſe;
Since ſtill ſome mighty joys are given,
Dear to her ſoul, the gifts of Heaven,
The ſweet domeſtic ties.

I will not now take up your time or my own with any affected uneaſineſs about my Verſes, by way of deprecating your cenſure, &c. I know you will like them for the ſake of the Author: and in your hands I have nothing to fear from the ſeverity of the Critic.

Mr. Sheridan and the children join in being affectionately remembered to you.

I am, Dear Sam,
Sincerely yours, &c.
FRANCES SHERIDAN.

This Ode to Patience is not a common-place rhapſody of ſombrous declamation which youthful poets dream, and, thoſe eſpecially of the female claſs, are wont to think ſo charming. In every ſtanza, almoſt in every line, the amiable writer has reference to ſome peculiar diſtreſs, to which, at one time or other, her hard condition had expoſed her. She has not given the incidents as they occurred, in an exact chronological ſeries; but rather conſulted poetical effect, more conſonant to her own feelings, and the order of nature. In the laſt ſtanza but one, the ſubject of which claims precedence in point of time, ſhe alludes to the fatal riot that took place at the Theatre, on the ſecond repreſentation of Mahomet, the 2d of March, 1754, which eventually proved the ruin of her huſband, and in a moment totally eclipſed the flattering proſpects of better days. That evening ſhe was peaceably ſitting at home, in converſation with a friend, the perſon to whom theſe Letters are addreſſed; when a Man, horrour in his countenance, breathleſs and pale, without ceremony

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mony ruſhed into the parlour. . . . Oh, Madam! Smock-alley is in flames! . . . In flames? ! . . . Yes, all in a blaze, Madam. . . . . She roſe, and looking wiſtfully at the door, advanced a ſtep or two towards it; but a little recovering herſelf, in a half-ſmothered, under voice, ſhe ſcarcely articulated, Where is your Maſter? . . . At the houſe; all is uproar and diſtraction, and I juſt got away with my life. . . . She had a heart ſuſceptible and feelingly alive to the calamities of her fellow-creatures.

The alarm was ſudden; it was too much;
Yet not a tear dropt; not a ſigh eſcaped her.
Speechleſs awhile and motionleſs ſhe ſtood,
In fearful ſtreights bewilder'd and abſorpt;
A ſubject for the pencil of Raphael!
What then, ſo tried, was her reſource? . . 'twas Patience.
With eyes uprais'd, ſhe, for the worſt prepar'd,
With pious reſignation ſits her down,
And her ſmooth cheek upon her white arm leaning,
Penſive and calm, awaits the dread event.

But ſhe remained not long in this diſconſolate poſture; the carriage ſtopped at the door, and Mr. Sheridan came in, unhurt. The ſervant, early in the diſturbance, anticipating the conſequence, in a panic ran home and was premature in his account; but ſhe overlooked his raſh precipitance, and never revealed it to his Maſter.

Mrs. Sheridan's ſecond Comedy, the Dupe, was brought out at Drury-lane, about the beginning of January, 1764, while Mr. Sheridan was abſent in Dublin. One night at his lodgings in Crow-ſtreet, juſt after ſupper a packet was delivered to him, which on opening proved to be a copy of the Dupe, which Mrs. Sheridan, in a letter accompanying it, informed him had failed; greatly owing, as it was thought, to ſome Theatrical cabals, fomented by a popular actreſs, who conceived her conſequence had been ſome how injured

by

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by the Sheridans. To theſe circumſtances the fair Author manifeſtly alludes in the fourth ſtanza of her Ode to Patience, and it is more than probable, that on this very occaſion it was written. However, Mr. Sheridan, though that evening he had exerted himſelf with great eclat in a very laborious part, I think Richard, conſulting the inclinations of two or three friends preſent, read to them the whole Comedy through; and afterwards gratified them with the contents of another letter, which at the ſame time he received along with it encloſed. I cannot take upon me to ſay, that I retain it preciſely verbatim, having never ſeen it but once; but I can poſitively affirm, it was (very nearly in the words) to the following effect:

To Mrs. SHERIDAN.

MADAM,

BELIEVE me, I am truly concerned that your Comedy has met with ſuch ſevere, and, without flattery I muſt add, ſuch undeſerved treatment on the ſtage. Neither am I ſingular in this opinion; the rapid ſale of it is an undeniable proof of its merit, which the Public have not been blind to in the cloſet. The demand for your piece at my ſhop, has been ſo uncommonly great, that, excluſive of the copy-money, it has enabled me to preſent you with the encloſed, of which I entreat your acceptance, as a ſmall teſtimony of that gratitude and reſpect, with which I have the honour to ſubſcribe myſelf,

Madam,

Your moſt obliged

And obedient humble ſervant,

ANDREW MILLAR.

To the honour of a London bookſeller, the encloſed was A BANK-BILL FOR ONE HUNDRED POUNDS ſterling; the ſame ſum which by agreement ſhe had before received from him for the copy-right.

This ſpeaks for itſelf and needs no comment.

Mr.

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Mr. SHERIDAN to Mr. WHYTE.

CHESTER, APRIL 30TH, 1764.

MY DEAR SAM,

I HAVE just time to inform you, that I landed safe to-day at three, after a good passage with abominable accommodation on board. I am setting out directly for London, and hope to reach it by Wednesday evening. Pray communicate this intelligence to Knowles, and let him know, he shall hear from me immediately after my arrival. I beg you will remember me in the kindest manner to Mr. and Mrs. Guinness, and let them know I shall ever retain the most grateful sense of their civilities to me. You shall hear from me soon again.

I am, Dear Sam,

Very sincerely,

And affectionately yours,

THOMAS SHERIDAN.

Mr. SHERIDAN to Mr. WHYTE.

RICHMOND, MAY 12TH, 1764.

MY DEAR SAM,

I KNOW it will give you pleasure to hear, that my friends have settled matters for me in such a way, that I shall be no longer in apprehensions with regard to what my humane creditors may do. I am at present on a visit, for a few days, to a particular friend at Richmond, while Mrs. Sheridan is preparing for our expedition to Scotland; on which we shall set out in eight or ten days; so that you need not answer this, or write, till I shall have given you notice of my arrival there. One of my friends, a powerful one, has cut out an employment for me, which will place me in a conspicuous point of view, beyond the reach of my enemies; and I have reason to believe, that the thing will be done early

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early next Winter. Pray tell Knowles that I ſhould have writ to him, by this poſt, but that I forgot to bring ſome franks down with me; I am preparing ſome neceſſary papers which I will ſend to him on my return to town. The kind concern you took in my affairs whilſt I was in Dublin, has endeared you much to me; and I hope the time is not far off, when I ſhall be able to make you ſuitable returns. Pray let me be remembered in the kindeſt manner to our good friends in Crow-ſtreet, and believe me to be ever

Sincerely, and

Affectionately yours, &c.

THOMAS SHERIDAN.

MR. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

EDINBURGH, AUGUST 8TH, 1764.

DEAR SAM,

I HAVE been ſo long ſilent, for no other reaſon, but that I never could find an hour in which I could ſit down to write with the leaſt ſatisfaction. I have paſt a moſt diſagreeable time for theſe laſt three months, having never been one day free from my old complaint, and frequently confined with colds. This, together with ſome other circumſtances, has baffled my deſign in coming hither. The laſt has been a moſt unfortunate year; but I may hope, from the old proverb, that things will mend ſoon. I ſhall in a few days ſet out for London; but have two or three viſits to pay by the way; ſo that I do not expect to reach it in leſs than a fortnight or three weeks. My plan of operations is ſettled, and I am perfectly eaſy in my mind, as I think I ſhall be guarded againſt all events from without, and have little to fear but from ill health. The completion of my Grammar and Dictionary muſt now employ all my time, as the foundation of my future fortune;

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fortune; and I doubt not but a large ſuperſtructure may be raiſed on it. When that is completed, my friends have ſomething in view for me, which will make me eaſy during my life; and probably enable me to provide well for my family. I received your former, with a few lines from Mrs. Guinneſs. Pray make my excuſes to her, for not having writ any thing in return; for I eſteem her much, and ſhall always retain a grateful ſenſe of the civilities I met with both from her and Mr. Guinneſs. But indeed I had not ſpirits to write, nor ſhould I have ſat down to the taſk now, but to prevent your imputing my ſilence to a wrong cauſe. Be aſſured, my dear Sam, I ſet a great value on your friendſhip, as I know it to be ſincere; a rare thing in this world!

Nor conſtrue any farther my neglects
Than that poor Brutus, with himſelf at war,
Forgets the ſhews of love to other men.

But I hope white hours are approaching, and then you ſhall hear often from me. I ſhall be always eager to communicate any good news to my friends, that they may participate of my ſatisfaction: but I have no delight in their ſympathizing with me in my diſtreſs. With reſpect to ſharing my good fortune, I could be a very prodigal; but I am a perfect miſer in regard to the ill, and would keep it all to myſelf.

If Mr. Richard Chamberlaine be ſtill in Dublin, remember me affectionately to him. I am pleaſed to hear that his affair is in ſo good a way; but ſhould be glad to hear the particulars. The letter which you mention, has never come to Mrs. Sheridan's hands; for ſhe has not received a line from you ſince our arrival here. Give my love to Knowles, and tell him that I had nothing to ſay worth paying a ſhilling for, and there are no franks to be had here; but I ſhall write to him ſoon.

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My head is ſo much out of order that I can add no more; but that I am,

Moſt ſincerely and
Affectionately yours,
THOMAS SHERIDAN.

If you anſwer this immediately, I ſhall probably receive it on my arrival in London. Direct to Bow-ſtreet as uſual.

MR. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

HARROW, SEPTEMBER 4TH, 1764.

DEAR SAM,

I HAD the pleaſure of receiving yours, ſoon after my arrival here, which was delayed by a few viſits on the road. I have not yet been at London; but ſome of my friends have been to ſee me here. They have now under deliberation what plan will be beſt for me to purſue; a few days will determine the moſt material point, and you ſhall immediately know the reſult. Dick Chamberlaine I find is arrived; but I have heard no particulars of him; I expect to know all about him this evening, from Mrs. Sheridan, who has been ſome days in London on buſineſs, and is to return to-day. I ſhall write ſhortly to you again, upon important matters; at preſent I only write to ſhew you, that I mean to be a punctual correſpondent, however little I may have to ſay, and to deſire that you will direct your letters to the care of Mr. Chamberlaine, till I ſend you another addreſs, *as I am about to ſhift my quarters.* I beg you will make my beſt compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Guinneſs, and believe me to be always

Sincerely and
Affectionately yours, &c.
THOMAS SHERIDAN.

MR.

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Mr. SHERIDAN to Mr. WHYTE.

Blois, October 14th, 1764.

YOU see, my dear Sam, by the above date, that I have carried my design into execution, of retiring for some time into France. My friends were unanimously of opinion that it was the best measure I could take, in order to have leisure to finish my work, without which I could have no farther pretensions to any favours. My state of health too made it absolutely necessary that I should remove into a better climate; for, as my disorder was gaining ground, I should not have been able to do any thing in England. The air here is inconceivably fine, and the alteration it has already made in me makes me confidently hope for a perfect cure. Mrs. Sheridan, Charles and the two girls are with me; Dick continues at Harrow. We are very busy in making all our necessary arrangements, so that I have not time at present to enter into a detail of our affairs. The journey was confoundedly expensive; but the cheapness of the place will make full amends. I could support my family here better upon a hundred pounds a year than upon five in London. We live in a very commodious cottage on the Banks of the Loire, in the suburbs of the town. This river is the most beautiful of any in France, and the country around delightful. French is spoken and taught in its greatest purity; and all other articles for the children's education are to be had at a very cheap rate. As I can now bid defiance to my merciless creditors, I shall be able to make such terms with them before my return as will make me easy for the rest of my life.

Pray make my most affectionate compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Guinness. I was sorry I could not see him in London; but I did not think it safe to go there, and I set out for Dover the day after I heard of his arrival. I shall be always

glad

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glad to hear of their welfare, and beg you will not fail to give me accounts of them when you write; my beſt regards and good wiſhes attend alſo Mr. and Mrs. Calderwood. I ſend you encloſed a letter to Knowles, as I think you are at preſent better able to pay the poſtage than he; but don't tell him I ſaid ſo. You ſee I uſe you without ceremony; I conſider you as my friend; for,

I am ſincerely
Yours, &c.
THOMAS SHERIDAN.

Direct to me, A Monſieur, Monſieur Sheridan, chez Madame des Combes, au Bourgh St. Jean, a Blois.

MR. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

BLOIS, DECEMBER 1ST, 1764.

DEAR SAM,

I HAVE been for ſome time in the greateſt ſurpriſe, and under the utmoſt uneaſineſs at not hearing any thing from Dublin. I wrote to you ſoon after my arrival here, with a letter incloſed to Knowles. I wrote at the ſame time to ſome other friends; but not a line have I had in anſwer. I fear, I ſhould rather ſay hope, that my letters have ſome how miſcarried; for ſuch a neglect of my friends, in my preſent ſituation, would be inſupportable. I have received much benefit from the air of this country, which is reckoned the pureſt in France, and I can labour hard now without feeling any ill effects from it. Mrs. Sheridan too is much better; the children too are in the higheſt health and ſpirits, and hard at work to acquire French, as they are not allowed to ſpeak a word of Engliſh, except on Sundays. Our ſituation here is as comfortable as we could hope for in our preſent circumſtances.

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ſtances. When I know that my letters reach you I have much to write to you about. Your letter directed for me in London, did not reach that place till after my departure; but was encloſed to me ſome time ſince by my brother Chamberlaine. There were a few lines in it from a lady, which call for an anſwer.

I am much obliged to you, my Dear Madam, for your kind remembrance of me, and the ſolicitude you expreſs at the unhappy ſtate of my affairs. Had Dublin abounded with ſuch good hearts as yours, I might ſtill have been employed in the ſervice of my country. But I hope yet to be in a ſtate of ſerving them, when I ſhall neither need their aſſiſtance, nor value their thanks. The ingratitude of the Public has been a general topic in all ages and countries, and a wiſe man is to lay his account, that he will never meet with any thing elſe, in return for his endeavours to ſerve the many-headed monſter. I hope your ſtate of health is better than it was, and that Mr. Guinneſs, my dear little pupil, Bob, and Dick are well. My beſt wiſhes ever attend you all.

Now, Sam, to return to you, though it is only to bid you farewel. If I do not receive an anſwer to this in due time, I ſhall be under terrible apprehenſions.

Yours ever,

THOMAS SHERIDAN.

Direct A Monſieur, Monſieur Sheridan, chez Madame De Combes Bourgh St. Jean, a Blois.

MR. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

BLOIS, MAY 24TH, 1765.

DEAR SAM,

I HAVE had a long fit of my old diſorder, which has lain heavy upon me for almoſt three months paſt. This malady is to me of the moſt mortifying nature in the world; for at a time

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time when I was puſhing on vigorouſly a work, which it is of the utmoſt importance to me to finiſh as ſoon as poſſible, it put as effectual a ſtop to my progreſs, as if it had deprived me of the uſe of my hands. Its nature is to take the mind priſoner and bind up all its faculties, as the gout does thoſe of the body. The leaſt attention, even to the writing of a letter, becomes then an inſupportable fatigue. Thoughts however continue to circulate; but they will take their own free courſe, and will ſuffer no conſtraint. The tyranny of thought over the mind, when the power of guiding or confining its courſe is taken away, is a cruel one. One train of reflection has ſucceeded to another in this way, without bringing any thing of pleaſant with them. The ſeveral ſcenes and deſigns of my paſt life preſented themſelves at different times to view, without affording any conſolation, but in the rectitude of my intentions; and upon the whole I find my ſituation in life, very ſimilar to that which is admirably drawn by Pope, where in anſwer to the Queſtion, What is it to be wiſe? He ſays:

'Tis but to know how little can be known,
To ſee all others faults, and feel our own:
Condemned in buſineſs or in arts to drudge,
Without a ſecond, or without a judge.
Truths would you teach, or ſave a ſinking land,
All fear, none aid you, and few underſtand:
Painful pre-eminence! yourſelf to view,
Above life's weakneſs and its comforts too.

One of the greateſt comforts of life, I have often been cruelly diſappointed in; I mean friendſhip: However, that ſhall not make me give up my expectation of ſtill finding that beſt balm of an afflicted mind, in the few for whom I ſtill feel it, and from whom I expect a return. I will believe that you are INCAPABLE of change in that reſpect; but wiſh you would

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would give me more frequent marks that I ſtill live in your memory. Let us have no retroſpects; be a good boy for the future, and I promiſe you I'll keep pace with you. I find myſelf much better within theſe two or three days, and hope the warm weather will ſet me up. In every other reſpect, except that curſed diſorder, I find myſelf much benefited by this excellent climate. Before the laſt attack, however, I had finiſhed my Dictionary, and was entering upon my Grammar; I ſhall now try to make up loſt time.

Mrs. Sheridan has finiſhed a Comedy, which I think an excellent one, ſpick and ſpan new throughout. She is now employed in concluding the Memoirs of Sidney Biddulph; to which ſhe was ſolicited by abundance of people before her departure for England. She beſtows many maledictions on the French, which quarrels with her tongue. The children are making great progreſs in it; and I have made ſuch advances that I am their maſter.

The unreaſonable part of the creditors, ſtill adhere to their abſurd maxims, ſo that I know not when I ſhall have it in my power to return. I am much pleaſed at the account you give me of Mr. Guinneſs; but what a plague became of your geography, when you talked of his making Blois his way to Lyons. My beſt wiſhes attend Mrs. Guinneſs, and her little family. Pray, Sam, write to me often; ſend all manner of news, good or bad; you cannot conceive what little things give pleaſure at ſuch a diſtance. Mrs. Sheridan and all the little ones ſend their loves.

I am ever ſincerely
And affectionately,
Yours, &c.
THOMAS SHERIDAN.

Theſe letters from Mr. and Mrs. Sheridan, with the two former, annexed to our REMARKS on Boſwell, &c. which in the ſtrict order of time ſhould have taken place here, include the

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the whole of what was judged neceſſary for the illuſtration and confirmation of facts on the preſent occaſion. The following letter is in anſwer to one ſent to Mr. Burton of London, together with a printed copy of heads of a plan laid before a ſelect committee of the Hibernian Society, then lately inſtituted in Dublin, for the Improvement of Education, and for carrying Mr. Sheridan's Scheme into immediate execution.

MR. BURTON* TO MR. WHYTE.

JUNE 12TH, 1758.

DEAR SIR,

YOU ſee by my abhorrence of all delay, in returning an anſwer to your firſt letter, how greatly deſirous I am of giving birth to that correſpondence you are pleaſed to mention. My activity in this article is in effect a ſpeedy return made to a firſt viſit: which is no leſs an overture to future friendſhip, than it is an earneſt of an immediate eſteem. Men of letters are the game, of which I am in continual purſuit; and where I am ſo happy as to find the leaſt traces of learning, like SCIPIO ÆMILIANUS, I hug the bewitching creature: and though perhaps, I may not be ſo fortunate as he was, to meet with a POLYBIUS, or a PANÆTIUS, yet I experience a certain degree of warmth in ſuch a ſunſhine, in which I delight to wanton.

From

* Edmund Burton, Eſq. M. A. Counſellor at Law, and ſometime Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. This gentleman has occaſionally enriched the Common-wealth of Letters with ſeveral valuable productions. Among others, The Satyrs of Perſius, tranſlated into Engliſh, with Notes critical and explanatory, by Edmund Burton, Eſq. Barriſter at Law, appeared in 1752, which is the book to which he alludes in the latter part of the letter. . . . He was by marriage great-uncle to Mrs. Whyte, on the maternal ſide; a family nearly related to Serjeant Hewitt, late Lord High Chancellor of Ireland.

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From hence you may naturally conclude, as I have diſcovered a taſte and diſcernment in you inferior to few; that I promiſe myſelf much ſatisfaction, from whatever obſervations you will favour me with. They will excite and enliven that zeal (for I profeſs no more) I have for literary purſuits; which, too frequently, for want of thoſe in whom I would wiſh to find the ſame diſpoſitions with myſelf, ſickens and dies away. Should you now and then communicate any thing you think curious in your reading; and ſometimes ſend me a gem, which you have picked out of the rich mines of antiquity, that I may ſurvey its beauties as well as yourſelf; you will make me happy, by keeping that flame alive.

I muſt confeſs to you, at the ſame time, though, in this part of the world, I can ſeldom converſe with ſuch a one as yourſelf (the little, mechanical, groveling genius, prevailing moſtly hereabouts) I find a comfortable retreat, for want of action, among my books and papers: and I dare ſay, you are never better pleaſed with Tully, than when, from a too great ſatiety of company, which was often his caſe, and the very reverſe of mine, he confeſſes himſelf to be moſt pleaſed amidſt his books and ſtatues. *Summum me eorum ſtudium tenet, &c.* is an expreſſion of that great man, which at the ſame time that it ſhews the generous ardour of his mind, muſt needs inſpire all thoſe who view him in this light, with a fondneſs for his memory, that knows no bounds. But I'll tire you no longer with idle deſcants of this nature: I'll proceed to the contents of your letter, from which I can plainly ſee, that you have not read that great man's letters to Atticus in vain. Give me leave to congratulate you upon the ſucceſs, that is likely to attend the eſtabliſhment of a Gymnaſium in Ireland. I'll venture to ſay, no conſiderable part of that ſucceſs will be owing to any one, who is better able to conduct his part in it, than yourſelf. I admire the

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plan you were ſo kind to ſend me, and the more ſo, as it is greatly deſtitute of all that ſhallow pedantry, generally obſervable in inſtitutions of this nature. A rich vein of imagination runs through the whole. There is viſibly a mind that thinks well, and a reſolution bold to execute what it thinks. Superior to all mechanical rules, the Author of this plan conſiders things, not as they are, but as they ſhould be. 'Tis owing to a contempt of nature and reaſon, that Schools and Univerſities are the Aſylums for ignorance. Should the execution be equal to the ſpirit of the plan, there will be no danger that the architect will alter his model, and deſcend to think ill, for the common venal reaſon, becauſe it is ſometimes more intereſting to think ill, than to think well. Honour, ſhame and pleaſure, are three incentives for the younger part of life, which the wiſeſt of the ancients had not courage enough to propoſe. Such a mixed ſcene of action and contemplation as is here intended, far out-does the admired Republic of Plato: ſince every article in the former is practical, whereas moſt of the maxims in the latter muſt e ver be ideal

You mention the book I deſired Mrs. Whyte to convey to you. It is a trifle not worth your acceptance. I ſhould have deſired your acceptance of it, when I had your company, had I thought it any way deſerving of it. I begin to have a very mean opinion of it; for there are many things I ſee in it, which I wiſh had been otherwiſe.

Mrs. Whyte's great diſtance from her friends, you ſay, has produced that uneaſineſs, which is often conſequential to it. 'Tis a kind of fine, that nature ſets upon us, for quitting thoſe uſages and cuſtoms, which are, with propriety, ſaid to be a ſecond nature. To part with what we have been long acquainted, is a loſs, ſay ſome, ſuperior to all requital.

Nos Patriæ fines, &c.

you

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you know very well, is a complaint as old as Virgil; if not as old as the Creation. The occaſion of their removal was neceſſity. Mrs. Whyte's has been choice. Time, experience, familiarity with the place, added to your more prevailing influence, will make all things eaſy to her; and ſhe muſt very ſoon know,

. . . . . levius fit patientiâ
Quicquid corrigere eſt nefas.

I am, Dear Sir,
Your moſt obedient
And ſincere
Petty-France, Humble ſervant,
Weſtminſter. EDMUND BURTON.

Mrs. Burton joins with me in her beſt affections to you and Mrs. Whyte.

The great object of all Mr. Sheridan's purſuits, reſpecting himſelf, was independence; to be attained, not by proſtituting his talents to the ſiniſter views of a party, and gulling the multitude with inflammatory harangues, but by his own perſonal exertions in ſome ſcheme of practical utility;* the foremoſt of which he conſidered Education. To this end, December 6th, 1757, he gave a public breakfaſt at the Muſic-hall in Fiſhamble-ſtreet; after which he pronounced an Oration on the Inſtitution of Youth, before a very numerous and reſpectable audience, previouſly invited for the purpoſe; many of the firſt characters in the kingdom, for rank and learning, were preſent; who, not only concurred with him in ſentiment, but as an earneſt of their determination to give his ſcheme energy and ſupport, entered into an immediate ſubſcription,

* See note on a former occaſion, page 81.

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ſubſcription, amounting to near one thouſand pounds ſterling, to enable him to proceed; and formed themſelves into a body under the name of the Hibernian Society for the Improvement of Education; a treaſurer and proper officers for the better conducting the ſame, were alſo choſen, and after ſeveral meetings and conſultations, a ſelect committee out of the body at large was appointed, to conſider Mr. Sheridan's propoſals in the detail; which on minute inveſtigation were unanimouſly approved, and reported accordingly. Thus far having accompliſhed his point, and proper perſons, as he imagined, being fixed on to conduct the buſineſs in his abſence, at the cloſe of the ſeaſon 1758, he went to England for the purpoſe, among others, of procuring ſuitable maſters; but when he thought, good eaſy man, full ſurely his glories were a ripening, his ill ſtars were conſpiring to undo him. Advantage was taken of his ſituation. The real or ſuppoſed prejudices ſubſiſting againſt his profeſſion were played off againſt him, and letters upon letters were ſent him, to ſhew that an Actor, at the head of ſuch a Seminary, would be an inſurmountable obſtacle to its ſucceſs. It was a ſpecious manoeuvre, and he voluntarily relinquiſhed, at leaſt for the preſent, the conduct of a ſcheme, for which he was decidedly competent, and which he had been labouring to accompliſh the better part of his life. He ſurrendered however upon certain ſtipulated conditions, which conditions were never complied with, and the only favour he obtained was the liberty of nominating a ſubſtitute.

Sometime after the plan was in part carried into execution; and, on a general acceptation of the principles laid down by Mr. Sheridan, the Hibernian Academy, King-ſtreet, Oxmantown, was opened under the ſuperintendancy of the Reverend Dr. Leland, S. F. T. C. D. Monday, January 8, 1759. Mr. Barry Yelverton, now Lord Yelverton, Chief Baron of his Majeſty's

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Majeſty's Court of Exchequer in Ireland, was elected head claſſic-maſter, and the Reverend Mr. Williamſon, who had lately opened ſchool in Queen-ſtreet, was appointed Mr. Yelverton's co-adjutor, in the ſecond chair. The Engliſh department was all along, from the beginning, intended for my Father; and Dr. Leland, with whom he was on a footing of particular intimacy, was very ſolicitous that he ſhould undertake it; for in an inſtitution where the advancement and perfection of the Engliſh Language was the leading principle, on the dereliction of the original founder, my Father, being perfectly poſſeſſed of his ideas and happy modes of inſtruction, was thought the only one competent to ſupply the vacancy, and diſcharge the duties of that important department. But being apprized, that Mr. Sheridan had relinquiſhed his ſtation as ſuperintendant, and having a flouriſhing eſtabliſhment of his own, he declined accepting the Doctor's offer. Mr. Williamſon not very long after dying, and Mr. Yelverton having gone to the Temple, the Reverend John Fletcher was appointed ſole Maſter. A year or two after he alſo died, and made room for his ſucceſſor, the Reverend Andrew Buck. By this time the principles upon which the Seminary was inſtituted were in a great meaſure laid aſide and forgotten; the ſubſcribers did not think it neceſſary to renew their ſubſcriptions; many of them indeed were never fulfilled; and it was left like any other ſchool to take its chance. Mr. Buck was a man of learning and ſome experience, having had a ſchool at Stephen's-green ſome years before he moved to King-ſtreet on the demiſe of Mr. Fletcher, and under his conduct this new eſtabliſhment flouriſhed ſeveral years with deſerved reputation; at his death, the houſe being much out of repair, it was neglected, and the inſtitution fell to the ground.

Had Mr. Sheridan been a man of the world, he probably would have played his cards better, and never would have been

been ſupplanted. But, elated with his partial ſucceſs, in ſtating to the ſociety the pecuniary arrangements, particularly for the profeſſors in their reſpective departments, which were liberal to a degree, and touching his expectations of emolument to himſelf, which were founded on a contingency of ſurplus after defraying every expence, he was too explicit; perhaps too ſanguine. His arguments were indeed cogent, and his concluſions gained him credit and applauſe; but his frankneſs awakened jealouſy, and expoſed him to invidious attacks. The proſpect he exhibited was a temptation to circumvent him, and among his hearers unluckily there were ſome, who neither wanted inclination nor ability to ſpeculate upon his capital. That was the rock he ſplit upon, and but for that, to a moral certainty, he might have arrived at that ſtate of independence for which he panted; and at this day, his family, though fortunately in ſituations that don't want it, might have derived honour and advantage from ſo noble an Inſtitution.

The three following letters are in no reſpect whatever connected with the general ſubject of the preceding pages; but, for their intrinſic merit, were thought worthy of preſerving. They are the only remains of a lady ſometime deceaſed, addreſſed to her preceptor by the amiable writer, in her ſeventeenth year. Her beauty and perſonal accompliſhments rendered her a conſpicuous ornament in the circles of the young and gay; and, for the due exerciſe of every domeſtic virtue, in private life, ſhe was, by all who had the happineſs of her acquaintance, eſteemed a pattern of excellence. She was married at a very early age, wealthily, perhaps not happily; yet in the midſt of opulence and temptation, ſhe was never influenced by faſhion or caprice to the neglect of any

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any religious or moral obligation. Having laudably discharged every duty of an affectionate and tender mother to two lovely infants, in giving life to a third she forfeited her own. She was an only child; her disconsolate parents with her lost every comfort and did not long survive. These unstudied essays of her juvenile pen will give the reader a faint idea of what she might have been, had it pleased Heaven to spare her.

To Mr. WHYTE, Grafton-Street, Dublin.

Minikin Cottage, Sept. 28, 1771.

NEVER did I more sincerely wish to see Mr. Whyte than at this minute, your letter has so pleased and perplexed me, that really I am at a loss to answer it. In the first place, your apologies are useless; be assured, after the many great obligations I have received from you, it would be a very hard task to persuade my pride I was forgot; that useful passion had already suggested every thing you obligingly ascribe to my good sense and good nature. I remember you once told me I should by no means indulge pride; but I know you will allow it to be very impolitick as well as ungenerous to cast off an old friend, and such I have often found pride; but never more useful than at present, as it has saved me from so severe a mortification, as believing myself neglected by you. By the dislike you have heard me express to writing letters, I only meant the generality of correspondents to whom one scribbles accounts of marriages, divorces, and deaths, interspersed with unmerited panygericks, scandalous anecdotes, and moral reflections; but as I think it unnecessary to say I do not hold you in that class, I shall only assure you, I will be very punctual in answering every letter you favour me with. Your wisdom used to appear supernatural to me, and I could almost think so still, for I had more than half resolved to try if I could prevail on you to continue to me the pleasure of hearing

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hearing from you, without expecting a return; but I felt so much reluctance at losing the pleasure of writing to you, that your disapprobation only was wanting to determine me against it.

Your putting your letter on the footing of a first visit accounts to me for the number of fine compliments it contains; but give me leave to ask, why you are so *very* much afraid I should think you flatter? I cannot express my gratitude for your kind promise of criticism and advice; but I hope to convince you of it by my attention to both, which you are perfectly right in supposing to be ever acceptable. Although your letter has much delighted me, I own it has not satisfied me; for I wished to know many particulars of your journey and voyage which I must wait for till your next; for notwithstanding your question, you have only writ sufficient to make me regret there is no more.

I am come down stairs to my mother for an answer to your flourish of thanks; she says she has received many very great obligations from Mr. Whyte; but never had it in her power to confer one; I now repent I asked her: I don't like such brilliant things from one's mother, there may be ugly comparisons drawn; but I am resolved never to blot any thing I think you can possibly make sense of, as I am sure of a candid allowance for all my faults; however, to avoid mama's wit disgracing mine, I give you notice, that for the future I will not deliver any compliments you shall send me, and also that you are to suppose at the bottom of all my letters, the family join, &c.—In return, whenever I hear from you I will say some very smart thing for you (if I don't forget) in which I will try not to disgrace your invention.

I did not receive your favour till Thursday, when I was dressing for Woolwich assembly; I had some thoughts of returning

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returning your viſit in full dreſs; but my head was that day ſo full of what was to happen, and the next day of what had happened, that I thought it was much better to let my ideas ſubſide a little, (which you know they ſoon do.) This I mention to account to you for a delay of three days in acknowledging the high obligation I am under to you for this laſt proof of your attention to me.

My uncle K *** is at Tunbridge, and I know you will be glad to hear he is much better. I think I have obeyed you now fully, as you will ſoon have my anſwer, and it is of a very reaſonable extent; ſo I will detain you no longer than to aſſure you once more, that your letters will ever be moſt welcome to,

Dear Sir,

Your grateful and

Affectionate Pupil,

M.-A. K * * *.

To Mr. WHYTE.

CHARLTON, AUGUST 6, 1772.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR letter, though by date it ſhould have come much ſooner, was not received until yeſterday, when a gentleman left that and a book; but neither his name nor addreſs.

You cannot imagine my ſurpriſe on finding you had complied with the requeſt in my laſt; for I aſſure you, upon my word of honour, I never received any thing from you ſince your letter of November the 9th, and I can anſwer for Miſs Cooper, whom I had the pleaſure of ſeeing ſeveral times laſt winter, and never without mutual enquiries about Mr. Whyte. She feared you were ill, and often ſaid ſhe would write; but I thought you had not time to ſpare for

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your trifling correſpondent; ſo left you to your leiſure, reſolving to be thankful for the few favours you would vouchſafe me, and to wait with patience for them. I am greatly mortified by thinking how much pleaſure I have loſt by the negligence of that wicked Mr. Johnſon; not only in reading the valuable writings he has detained, but in the ſuſpenſion of a correſpondence I ſo highly eſteemed. The only excuſe he can make is, that he was ſenſible of the value of what you committed to his care, and ſuffered ſelf-love to get the better of probity; however, I will ſearch after him, for which purpoſe I wiſh you had given me a more explicit direction. I do not wonder at the anger ſo viſible in your letter, nor does it give me much pain, as I know this will remove it; for which I am ſo impatient, that in ſpite of curioſity, and a violent tooth-ach, I have ſat down to write without even reading in the book, you ſo condeſcendingly ſent me, 'till I diſcharge my conſcience by writing. So I will not thank you before I know for what.

Miſs Cooper (whom I ſhall write to as ſoon as I conclude this) ſpent the winter in London; but had not the pleaſure ſhe propoſed herſelf there, as Mrs. Hamilton was in great diſtreſs moſt of the time for poor Miſs Hamilton, whoſe life was deſpaired of, for a long time, as ſhe had a dangerous fever, and recovered very ſlowly, while her Father was in Ireland; but I have the pleaſure of informing you ſhe is much better, and going to Briſtol for the reſtoration of her health, which I ſincerely hope will have the deſired effect.

Miſs K * * * k, an intimate friend of Miſs Cooper's, whom you might have ſeen with her at Bromley, had a violent fever about the ſame time, which ſettled in her brain; ſhe lived for ſome months in the moſt deplorable ſtate of madneſs, ſo that her death was conſidered as a bleſſing by her friends.

Miſs Cooper is returned to her lodgings at Bromley.

I did

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I did not expect that the next letter I wrote you, would contain apologies for myself; for on the contrary, I intended it to be in the true ſpirit of haughtineſs, as I did not think you could plead an excuſe ſufficient for your breach of promiſe, in not coming at Chriſtmas; however I have it under your own hand, that you will come now, therefore ſhall keep all my reproaches 'till I ſee you, and if you write to me immediately that I am forgiven my unintentional offence, and come very ſoon, perhaps I ſhall ſhew my wonderous placable diſpoſition, and graciouſly remit your fault; but if you do not bring your apology in perſon——take the conſequence.

I ſhould have told you long before, that my Father and Mother are very glad to hear from you now, and were very ſorry not to hear ſooner; that they hope to ſee you this ſummer, but fear they ſhall not, well knowing you are a gentleman very liable to accidents, and diſappointing your friends, as already mentioned, &c. &c. But I have ſaid ſo much about my own joy and ſorrow that I will not repeat theirs; but muſt beg you will write to me as ſoon as convenient after the receipt of this, as you know you are in my debt for the reſt of your journey from England, your laſt account ending at your arrival at Conway.

My Mother deſires me to tell you ſhe hopes to ſee you before you get this, ſo I will not detain you longer than to remind you, that your preſence will give real pleaſure to us all; but particularly to

Your grateful and
Impatient pupil,
M.-A. K * * *.

P. S. Dr. Hawkeſworth's petulance and your cool and gentlemanlike manner of taking him down, is much talked of at Bromley; and I can truly aſſure you, that, even at his own door, the tide of approbation runs ſtrongly in your favour.

To

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To Mr. WHYTE, Grafton-street, Dublin.

London, Dec. 7, 1772.

Dear Sir,

ON communicating your welcome letter (which arrived this day) to my Father, he defired I would write immediately to ſuſpend your intentions of ſending over the books, as he apprehends they will be liable to a very high duty if imported either bound or ſewed; however, he will inform himſelf particularly, and write to you in a few days. The multiplicity of daily publications here has, I ſuppoſe, prevented my ſeeing any extracts from your works, eſpecially as we don't take the paper which contains the poem you mention; but I will endeavour to find it out. I make no doubt of the book ſucceeding to your wiſhes; there are numerous pieces in it whoſe beauty muſt ſtrike every reader, though there are ſome which will be beſt reliſhed by thoſe who know the perſons or circumſtances they allude to.

I ſhall not ſay we were diſappointed at your not mentioning any intention of not viſiting us this Chriſtmas—we are now ſo accuſtomed to expect you by your own promiſe, that I ſuppoſe it is to be a favour, that you now plainly ſhew us you don't intend to come; 'tis very well, Sir; but I have hopes that you may be obliged to come yet, painful as the journey ſeems to be to you; for you muſt allow, that if you were on the ſpot you could tranſact this buſineſs better yourſelf, than any other can for you; beſides, I don't think my Father underſtands it, and, in ſhort, for every reaſon I would adviſe you to come in perſon, though I have no expectations that you will: a thought ſtrikes me that you may intend it; but out of pure contradiction you have concealed it; if ſo, that is really very cruel, and I am ſadly mortified with it, by the ſight of ſo much blank paper at the end of your letter; indeed I never intended any ſuch hint as you ſeem to think about

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about the length of your favours, and I promiſe you I would much rather fill my paper, be it ever ſo large, than receive ſuch another tantalizing epiſtle as your laſt: I am vexed as often as I look on it, and reflect what a number of ingenious ſentences might have ſhined on that ſpace much to my pleaſure and advantage, or how far you might have continued your journal, which I now deſpair of ever ſeeing concluded. I beg you will not revenge yourſelf again without knowing you have cauſe to be offended; for I am ſure you will not look upon any thing unintentional as ſuch, and I aſſure you it was my humility (which I now moſt heartily repent of) that cauſed that unfortunate paragraph. There is but one part of your letter I like; I don't aſk pardon for ſaying ſo, both becauſe I have leave to criticiſe upon your writings, and becauſe I am now afraid to apologize for any thing, as you know people who have ſeverely ſuffered for one fault, are too apt to run into the oppoſite extreme: that one part is where you give me an opportunity of obliging you, which will be ever moſt acceptable to me; but the reſt of the letter contains only inſiſting upon the confirmation of a promiſe I was always unwilling to make, ſcolding, flattering, and threatning me for endeavouring to eſcape it, and intreaties to make your preſence here uſeleſs to yourſelf; I muſt tell you I don't like ſuch letters, which is an expreſſion I thought it would have been impoſſible for me to have uſed to you; but I am ſo provoked at the delicate malice of your laſt page, that I am reſolved to be ſaucy in order to try if that will produce an anſwer that may compenſate by its length and ſpeed, for my diſappointment in the laſt.

In ſpite of my anger I can't help telling you, that if any thing elſe ſhould occur to you wherein we can ſerve you, we ſhall with great pleaſure execute your orders; but we ſhall be yet more pleaſed if you will come yourſelf and ſettle the

matter

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matter in perſon. I hope neither "unavoidable neceſſity," nor Lord Louth, will detain you this vacation from paying that viſit to London which has been ſo long expected by your friends here; but by none more impatiently than,

Dear Sir,

Your moſt grateful Pupil,

M.-A. K***.

THIS little Miſcellaneous Production is now brought to a final period. The following letter, conciſe and ſimple as it is (together with the anſwer) is inſerted as one proof at leaſt, that ancient virtue is not wholly baniſhed the earth; and by the few who have minds yet tuned to the conſolations of Friendſhip, it will not be deemed an unſuitable concluſion. It affords a ſketch of diſintereſted attachment, that commenced between the parties at ſchool, and, though early called off by very different purſuits, and ſcarcely ever three months together reſident in the ſame kingdom, is of upwards of half a century's duration.* A rare example in any age, and hardly to have been expected in critical times like the preſent! †

Amicus certus cernitur in incerta re.

Such

* Mr. Vickers, the writer of the letter, was many years an officer in the army, and did the State ſome ſervice. He had a brother alſo at the ſame ſchool, Lewis Vickers, who had afterwards a command in the navy, and to the infinite regret of all who knew him, loſt his life in the exceſs of his ardour againſt a ſuperior force.

† The deſperate ſtate of inſecurity, which, at the period alluded to, prevailed in Ireland, is ſufficiently notorious. The accounts of a traitorous combination formed in that kingdom, "the moſt dangerous and ſingular which is to be found in the annals of the civilized world,"(1) had been carried over and ſpread throughout Wales. Numbers of families, infirm old men, women and children, of conſideration and opulence at home, had fled thither from the horrors of unbridled robbery and aſſaſſination, which

(1) *Ld. Chancellor's ſpeech in anſwer to Ld. Moira, Mond. Feb.* 19, 1798.

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Such an incident in the boaſted ages of antiquity, under Greek or Roman names, could not fail of celebrity. Poets would have adorned it in lofty and heroic ſong; Moraliſts would have deſcanted upon it in their treatiſes; and Critics and Commentators would have blazoned it forth in glowing and permament colours: but, a truce to pedantry; with your leave, courteous Reader! the letter ſhall be its own interpreter.

To SAMUEL WHYTE, Esq. GRAFTON-STREET, DUBLIN.

HOLYHEAD, THE 29TH MAY, 1798.

DEAR MR. WHYTE,

DUBLIN ſeems to be in a very unpleaſant ſtate; you and your old friend are at a time of life, that retirement is moſt agreeable to them both; come over to me; take your chance with a bachelor, where you will have a warm bed and a hearty welcome. I beg my beſt compliments to your Son and Daughter: I am,

My dear Mr. WHYTE,

Yours ſincerely,

WILLIAM VICKERS.

To

which pervaded moſt parts of that diſtracted country, and raged at the very doors of the capital; and many of thoſe unhappy fugitives are at this day, [July the 20th, 1798] wandering about dependent on the caſual bounty of the hoſpitable natives of that ancient and renowned principality. The communication between the two ſhores is in all caſes open and convenient; they had the printed documents of whatever was in agitation, confirmed by numerous living teſtimony, in their hands. They had heard that a horde of midnight conſpirators had diſperſed themſelves through every quarter of the metropolis, for the purpoſe of its deſtruction: the taking of their Chief, a man of high pedigree, Saturday May the 19th, though it gave them a momentary check, in fact accelerated their deſign; and the night of the 23d was fixed on for a general riſing, to burn the city, and without diſtinction of age or ſex, to maſſacre the peaceable inhabitants of every deſcription; and ſo imminent was the criſis of their fate, that, if but a ſingle hour more had elapſed without prevention, the blow would have been ſtruck. It was alſo univerſally known in Wales, that Dublin was proclaimed in a ſtate of inſurrection, and ſubject to martial law; and that the bloody enſigns of rebellion, with all its ſavage concomitants, braved defiance to the laws in open day, diſplaying ſcenes of treachery and devaſtion thro' the country from one end to the other; under theſe impreſſions, Mr. Vickers' friendly invitation was diſpatched.

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To WILLIAM VICKERS, Esq. Holyhead.

Dublin, June 6th, 1798.

My very dear and valuable old friend,

I HAVE received your very kind and welcome letter, and eſtimate your good intention and friendly invitation at this perilous juncture, as I ought. I do moſt ſincerely aſſure you, nothing that has happened theſe many years, has more thoroughly gratified the feelings of my heart; and I have only to regret, that at preſent I cannot avail myſelf of your kindneſs. The Almighty Diſpoſer of Events, who has hitherto been my Protector, has appointed me a ſtation to maintain, and I muſt not deſert my poſt. I have a Son and Daughter and three infant Grand-children, whoſe Protector under God I ſtill am, and to whom my preſence is neceſſary, and cannot reconcile it to myſelf to abandon them in theſe troubleſome times; troubleſome indeed they truly are. Hereafter I may take advantage of your kindneſs. Wales is a delightful, a happy country, to which you know I have long looked forwards as an aſylum in the evening of life, from anxiety and fatigue, of which my portion has not been a ſmall one; and I really think there are few living who could more cordially guard the fire-ſide, and ſmoke a comfortable pipe together, than your old friend and you. I am no politician, and, therefore, at preſent, can entertain you with little in that way; things however, I imagine, are not growing worſe; rather, I would perſuade myſelf, taking a turn for the better; though really bad enough. In hopes, therefore, of their coming about, I cloſe my letter, wiſhing you every happineſs, with this aſſurance, that I am

My worthy Friend,

Grafton-ſtreet, No. 75. Moſt ſincerely yours,

SAMUEL WHYTE.

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THE Origin of the Story of the HERMIT AND THE ANGEL was a ſubject of much enquiry in the days of Addiſon, Pope and Swift; and the late publication of it in the Third Edition of WHYTE'S POEMS, from that obſolete folio of Wynkyn de Worde's, has been a new ſpur to the curioſity of the Literati: happy had it been for the Preſent Times, if Speculations equally harmleſs could have contented them. The old faſhioned dreſs in which we have reſtored it to the Public, though evidently the ſame in which it was originally introduced to the Engliſh Reader, appears to be a tranſlation; it is ſaid, from the French. The French copy we have not ſeen; nor perhaps any one elſe, in this, or the preceding century; but by perſevering reſearch, the ſtory has been traced to one of the rareſt in the catalogues of rare books, the GESTA ROMANORUM; which, after long and almoſt hopeleſs enquiry, was diſcovered in the library of Trinity College, Dublin. CC. 23, 15. It is termed an octavo, probably a pot octavo, being preciſely five inches four-tenths, by three inches eight-tenths. Two-third of the title, from top to bottom, is irregularly torn away, and, being of a quaint device, cannot be made out: The imprint is wanting; but, by the imperfect remains, it ſeems to have been edited ſomewhere in France. It is cloſe ſet in a ſmall Gothic type, and almoſt in every line we meet with words ſtrangely contracted; for inſtance, *Hois* for *Hominis*; *mie*, *miſerecordiæ*; *Oi*, *Omni*, &c. The folia or leaves, not paged; but numbered, as cuſtomary with our earlieſt typographers, making in all 172, containing 181 capitula or chapters, with a colophon annexed, as follows, viz.

Ex Geſtis Romanorum cum pluribus applicatis Hyſtoriis de Virtutibus ac Vitiis miſtice ad intellectus tranſumptis recollectorii, Finis, Explicit. Anno, noſtre ſalutis MCCCCCVIII.

For an Account of this extraordinary Book, ſee Tyrwhitt's Chaucer, vol. iv. and Warton's Engliſh Poetry, vol. iii.

From the Edition of 1508, we now give the archetype, to which our old Black Letter Friends, Dr. Henry More and their ſeveral ſucceſſors, are indebted.

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HEREMITA,

Ex Gestis Romanorum, Ca. lxxx. Fo. lxxv.

DE VERSUTIA DIABOLI ET QUOD JUDICIA DEI SUNT OCCULTA.

ERAT quidam Heremita qui cum in ſpeluncâ quâdam jacebat et diebus ac noctibus devotè Deo ſerviebat. Juxta cellam ſuam erat quidam paſtor ovium qui paſcebat oves. Accidit uno die quod paſtor erat ſomno oppreſſus, ipſo dormiente quidam latro venit et omnes oves ſecum abſtulit. Superveniens Dominus ovium a paſtore querit ubi erant oves. Ille vero incepit jurare quod oves perdidit, ſed quod penitus ignorabat. Dominus hoc audiens furore repletus ipſum occidit. Heremita hoc videns ait in corde ſuo, O Deus! ecce homo iſte culpam innocenti dedit et ipſum occidit. Ex quo ergo permittis talia fieri propter hoc ad mundum vadamus ſicut cæteri vitam ducam. His cogitatis ille Heremitarium dimiſit et ad mundum perrexit: ſed Deus ipſum perdere nolebat. Angelum, in formâ Hominis, ad eum miſit ut ſe ei aſſociaret. Quem cum Angelus in via euntem inveniſſet; ait ei. Chariſſime! quo vadis? Ad ille; Ad iſtam civitatem ante me. Angelus dixit ei. Ego in via ero comes tuus quod Angelus Dei ſum et ad te veni ut ſimus ſocii in hac via. Ambo ambulabant adverſus civitatem. Cum autem intraſſent hoſpitium a quodam milite propter Dei amorem petebant. Miles vero ſatis gratanter eos recepit et honorificè, ac ſplendidè cumque bonâ devotione in omnibus miniſtravit. Miles iſte tum unicum filium habebat in cunabulis jacentem quem multum diligebat. Cœnâ factâ Camera eſt aperta et lecti ſatis honorificè ornati pro Angelo et Heremitâ. Mediâ vero nocte ſurrexit Angelus et puerum in cunabulis ſtrangulavit. Hoc videns Heremita intra ſe cogitavit. Nunquid iſte erat Angelus Dei? Bonus miles omnia neceſſaria propter Dei amorum ei dedit et non habuit niſi unicum filium innocentem et iſte eum occidit; ſed tamen non audebat ei quicquam dicere. Manè ambo ſurrexerunt et ad civitatem aliam perrexerunt

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THE PARABLE OF THE

EREMITE AND THE ANGEL,

ACCORDING TO DR. HENRY MORE.

DIALOGUE II. CHAP. XXIV.

A CERTAIN *Eremite* having conceived great jealouſies touching the due adminiſtration of Divine Providence in external occurrences in the world, in this anxiety of mind was reſolved to leave his cell, and travel abroad, to ſee with his own eyes how things went abroad in the world. He had not gone half a day's journey, but a young man overtook him and joyn'd company with him, and inſinuated himſelf ſo far into the *Eremite*'s affection, that he thought himſelf very happy in that he had got ſo agreeable a companion. Wherefore reſolving to take their fortunes together, they always lodged in the ſame houſe. Some few days travels had over-paſt before the Eremite took notice of any thing remarkable. But at laſt he obſerved that his Fellow-traveller, with whom he had contracted ſo intimate a friendſhip, in an houſe where they were extraordinary well treated, ſtole away a gilt cup from the gentleman of the houſe, and carried it away with him. The Eremite was very much aſtoniſhed with what he ſaw done by ſo fair and agreeable a perſon as he conceived him to be, but thought not yet fit to ſpeak to him or ſeem to take notice of it. And therefore they travel fairly on together as aforetimes, till night forced them to ſeek lodging. But they light upon ſuch an houſe as had a very unhoſpitable owner, who ſhut them out into the outward court, and expoſed them all night to the injury of the open weather, which chanced then to be very rainy; but the Eremite's fellow-traveller unexpectedly compenſated his hoſt's ill entertainment with no meaner a reward than the gilt cup he had carried away from the former place, thruſting

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in qua in domo unius civis satis honorificè fuerunt recepti et splendidè ministrati. Civis iste quendam aureum cyphum quem miro modo dilexit, habuit in quo ultra modum gloriabatur. Media nocte surrexit Angelus et furatus est cyphum illum. Heremita hoc videns intra se cogitabat; iste malus Angelus est ut credo. Iste civis nobis optime fecit et iste furatus est cyphum suum. tamen nihil ei loquebatur quia timuit eum. Mane vero surrexerunt et per viam ambulabant, donec ad quandam aquam pervenerunt ultra quam erat pons: pontem ascenderunt et quidam pauper iis obviabat. Ait Angelus, charissime! monstra nobis viam versus talem civitatem. Pauper vertit se et cum digito viam versus civitatem ostendit. Cum vero vertisset se Angelus subito per scapulas eum accepit et ultra pontem projecit, et submersus est pauper. Quod cum Heremita vidisset, ait in corde suo, scio jam quod iste diabolus est et non Angelus Dei bonus. Quid mali fecit pauper iste? et tamen eum occidit. Ab illo tempore cogitabat ab eo discedere; verum timens nihil loquebatur ei. Cum vero circa horam vespertinam ad civitatem perveniissent ad domum cujusdam divitis accesserunt et hospitium pro Dei amore petebant; ille vero simpliciter eis negavit, ait Angelus Dei. Amore Dei saltem tectum domus nobis concedatis ne lupi aut malæ bestiæ hic nos devorent. Ille ait; Ecce domus ubi porci mei jacent; si placet vobis cum eis jacere potestis; sin autem recedatis quod alium locum vobis non dabo. Ait ei Angelus; si aliud non potest fieri, cum porcis vestris jacebimus et sic factum est. Mane vero surrexerunt, Angelus hospitem vocavit et ait, Charissime! do tibi cyphum istum, et dedit ei cyphum quem furatus fuerat ab illo cive. Heremita hoc videns, ait intra se. Jam sum expertus quod iste est diabolus. Bonus homo erat qui cum omni devotione nos recepit et furatus est ei cyphum et dedit isti pessimo qui negavit nobis hospitium. Ait Angelo. Nolo vobiscum amplius exspectare ad Deum vos recommendo. Angelus dixit ei: Audite me et tunc recedito.

EXPOSITIO.

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thrusting it in at the window when they departed. This the Eremite thought was very pretty, and that it was not covetousness, but humour, that made him take it away from its first owner. The next night, where they lodged, they were treated again with a deal of kindness and civility: but the Eremite observed with horrour that his fellow-traveller for an ill requital strangled privately a young child of their so courteous host in the cradle. This perplext the mind of the poor Eremite very much; but in sadness and patience forbearing to speak, he travelled another day's journey with the young man, and at evening took up in a place where they were more made of than any-where hitherto. And because the way they had to travel next morning was not so easie to find, the master of the house commanded one of the servants to go part of the way to direct them; whom, while they were passing over a stone-bridge, the Eremite's fellow-traveller caught suddenly betwixt the legs and pitched him head-long from off the bridge into the river, and drowned him. Here the Eremite could have no longer patience, but flew bitterly upon his fellow-traveller for those barbarous actions, and renounced all friendship with him, and would travel with him no longer nor keep him company. Whereupon the young man smiling at the honest zeal of the Eremite, and putting off his mortal disguise, appeared as he was, in the form and lustre of an angel of God, and told him he was sent to ease his mind of the great anxiety it was incumbered with touching the DIVINE PROVIDENCE. In which, said he, nothing can occur more perplexing and paradoxical than what you have been offended at since we two travelled together. But yet I will demonstrate to you, said he, that all that I have done is very just and right. For as for that first man from whom I took the gilded cup, it was a real compensation

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EXPOSITIO.

Certiſſime quando eras in Heremitario, dominus ovium paſtorem injuſte occidit. Scias quod paſtor ille pro tunc mortem non meruit; ſed alias commiſit quare mori non deberet. tunc temporis inventus eſt ſine peccato, Deus ergo permiſit eum occidi ut pœnam poſt mortem evaderet, propter peccatum quod alias committeret pro quo nunquam penitentias fecerat. Latro vero quod evaſit, cum omnibus ovibus pœnam eternam ſuſtinet, et dominus ovium quod paſtorem occidit vitam ſuam emendabit per largas eleemoſynas et opera miſerecordiæ quam ignoranter fecit. Demum filius iſtius militis de nocte ſtrangulavi quod nobis bonum hoſpitium dedit: Scias quod antequam puer ille natus erat miles optimus eleemoſynarius erat, et multa opera miſerecordiæ fecit. Sed poſtquam natus eſt puer factus eſt parcus cupidus et omnia colligit ut puerum divitem faciat ſic quod erit cauſa perditionis ejus et ideo puerum occidi, et jam ſicut prius factus eſt bonus Chriſtianus. Deinde Cyphum illius civis quí nos cum devotione recepit furatus fui. Scias tu quod antequam Cyphus ille erat fabrificatus non erat ſobrior eo in tota terra; ſed tantum de Cypho gaudebat poſt fabricationem quod omni die tantum de eo bibebat quod bis aut ter omni die fuit inebriatus, et ideo cyphum abſtuli et factus eſt ſobrius ſicut prius. Deinde pauperem in aquam projeci. Scias quod pauper iſte bonus Xtianus fuit; ſed ſi ad dimidium miliare ambulaſſet alium in peccato mortale occidiſſet: ſcias jam eſt ſalvatus et regnat in cæleſti gloria. Deinde cyphum illius civis dedi illi quod nobis bonum hoſpitium negavit. Scias quod nihil in terra ſit ſine cauſa. Ipſe nobis conceſſit donum porcorum et ideo cyphum ei dedi et regnabit poſt vitam in inferno. Pone ergo omni modo cuſtodiam ori tuo ut Deo non detrahas. Ipſe enim omnia novit. Heremita hoc audiens cecidit ad pedes Angeli, et veniam petiit ad Heremitarium perrexit et factus eſt bonus Chriſtianus.

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penſation indeed of his hoſpitality; that cup being ſo forcible an occaſion of the good man's diſtempering himſelf, and of hazarding his health and life, which would be a great loſs to his poor neighbours, he being of ſo good and charitable a nature. But I put it into the window of that harſh and unhoſpitable man that uſed us ſo ill, not as a booty to him, but as a plague and ſcourge to him, and for an eaſe to his oppreſſed neighbours, that he may fall into intemperance, diſeaſes, and death itſelf. For I knew very well that there was that inchantment in this cup, that they that had it would be thus bewitched with it. And as for that civil perſon whoſe child I ſtrangled in the cradle, it was in great mercy to him, and no real hurt to the child, who is now with God. But if that child had lived, whereas this gentleman had been piouſly, charitably and devoutly given, his mind, I ſaw, would have unavoidably ſunk into the love of the world, out of love to his child, he having had none before, and doting ſo hugely on it; and therefore I took away this momentary life from the body of the child, that the ſoul of the father might live for ever. And for this laſt fact, which you ſo much abhor, it was the moſt faithful piece of gratitude I could do to one that had uſed us ſo humanely and kindly as that gentleman did. For this man, who by the appointment of his maſter was ſo officious to us as to ſhew us the way, intended this very night enſuing to let in a company of rogues into his maſter's houſe, to rob him of all that he had, if not to murther him and his family. And having ſaid thus, he vaniſhed. But the poor Eremite, tranſported with joy and amazement, lift up his hands and eyes to heaven, and gave glory to God, who had thus unexpectedly delivered him from any farther anxiety touching the ways of his Providence; and thus returned with chearfulneſs to his forſaken cell, and ſpent the reſidue of his days there in piety and peace.

Notwithſtanding

Notwithſtanding the extreme ſcarcity of the *Geſta Romanorum*, this ſingular book has gone thro' various impreſſions.

Two copies of it were found in the numerous and ſplendid collection of the late Reverend and learned Thomas Crofts. See Bibliotheca Croftſiana, London, 1783, pp. 67, 126.

1300 *Ex Geſtis Romanor. hyſtorie notabiles*, folio, *nitidiſs. in cor. turs.* EDIT. PRIMA. . . . . *Sine Loco aut Nom. Impreſſoris.*

2487 *Ex Geſtis Romanorum Hyſtorie notabiles collecte*; de Viciis Virtutibuſq. tractantes; cum Applicationibus moraliſatis et myſticis. *Literis Gothicis*, 8vo. *perg.* Venet. *per* Alex de Bindonis MCCCCCXX.

We have alſo met with accounts of other Editions, viz.

Geſta Romanorum, &c. *finis Anno noſtre ſalutis* MCCCCLXXXIX. Fo.

Geſta Romanorum, &c. . *Goud. per Gerardum Leeu* MCCCCXC. Fo.

Tyrwhitt in his account of "this ſtrange book" makes mention of ſeveral editions; the firſt containing but 152 chapters, which were afterwards increaſed to 181, as in the Edition he had; printed at Rouen, 1521. It was among the earlieſt put to preſs; and, concluding from circumſtances, he thinks "one of our countrymen was the Author." Chaucer owes many obligations to the *Geſta Romanorum*, and no leſs Gower, Lydgate, Occleve, and others, who manifeſtly borrowed many of their ſtories from it. There can be no doubt that it was of great uſe in compiling *the Floure of the Commaundements*; another book no leſs ſtrange and uncommon. Dr. Farmer mentions alſo an old tranſlation of the *Geſta Romanorum*, in Engliſh, printed by Wynkyn de Worde, where he found the ſtory of the Caſkets, &c. in the Merchant of Venice; a great variety of other incidents adopted by Shakſpeare are likewiſe derived from the ſame ſource.

Dr. Henry More's Dialogues on the Attributes of God and his Providence, five in Number, from the 2d of which, the foregoing narrative of the Hermit in Engliſh is taken, were publiſhed under the name of Franciſcus Palæopolitanus, An. 1668; an imperfect ſet of which is to be ſeen in Biſhop Marſh's Library, St. Patrick's, Dublin.

It

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It requires no extraordinary ſhare of black letter information to diſcover, that our elder bards of the reformed type are not altogether ſo much beholden to the Greeks and Romans as has been fondly imagined. However they may have formed their plans or improved their diction on the claſſic models, their pages are highly illuminated with the treaſures of Gothic lore; and the romances and legendary narratives of the olden times, have proved to them plentiful ſources of intereſting and ſublime conceptions.* Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy ſuggeſted to Milton the outline, and many of the moſt favourite images of his L'Allegro and Il Penſoroſo; even the particular turn and meaſure of the verſe he adopted from Burton; as Wharton has alſo remarked in his valuable edition of that great poet's juvenile productions. The Anatomy of Melancholy, though ſo little known to the generality of readers, is ſtill a copious ſtore-houſe of uſeful diſcoveries, information, and amuſement to modern wits; for proof we need go no farther than Sterne. There is another obſolete folio, to which we may trace many ſtriking ſublimities of Milton; to mention but one; the poetical depth and immenſity of the Infernal Regions, which the critics will have, a flight of competitorſhip with Homer and Virgil. This book has for its title, The Polychronicon . . . It was the work of Ranulph Higden, Monk of Bury, tranſlated at the requeſt of Lord Barclay. The firſt edition imprented by Wynkyn de Worde, MCCCCXCIII: The ſecond, by Peter Treveris, MCCCCCXXV, and the third, (a fair copy of which is preſerved in Marſh's Library, St. Patrick's, Dublin) by the ſame Peter Treveris, imprented at Southwerke, in the year of

X our

* It may be proper to notice, though not ſtrictly in its place, that, in the Catalogue of the College Library, the Book from which the HERMIT is taken, appears under the title of "Recollectorium ex Geſtis Romanorum de Vitiis et Virtutibus, 8vo. Francof. 1508." .... Ad illa, ad iſtam civitatem .... in domo unus civis .... quidam Pauper eis obviabat, &c. are the original reading.

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our Lord God MCCCCC & XXVII, the XVI daye of Maye. Even Machiavel has been laid under contributions, and Hiſtory degraded into a vehicle of fiction; which, favourably ſpeaking, is but a pitiful application of talents, and a palpable encroachment on the province of poetry.

The learned and judicious Zimmerman, who was himſelf a native of Swiſſerland, gives up the ſtory of WILLIAM TELL, of which in his excellent Eſſay on Solitude, we find the following relation:

"WILLIAM TELL was one of the principal authors of the revolution in Swiſſerland in the year 1307. GRISLER, who governed that country under the Emperor Albert, obliged him, on pain of death, to ſhoot from a conſiderable diſtance, with an arrow at an apple which was placed on the head of his infant ſon, and, it is ſaid, that he had the good fortune to carry away the apple without doing the ſmalleſt injury to the child. The governor, on approaching to congratulate him on his dexterous achievement, perceived another arrow concealed under the garments of the ſucceſsful archer; and on inquiring of him for what uſe he intended it, "I brought it," replied TELL, "for the purpoſe of revenge; its eager point "ſhould have drank the blood of thy heart, inhuman Tyrant, "if I had the misfortune to kill my ſon." The ſtory of the apple, however, which had before been told of a Goth ſoldier named TOCHO, is juſtly ſuſpected by the later hiſtorians. The Swiſs were willing to adorn the birthday of their liberty by the fable of ſome ſurpriſing event. But it is certain that TELL, after having ſuffered a long and rigorous confinement, killed the governor with an arrow, and gave by that means a ſignal to the conſpirators.

In one of our old Engliſh ballads, as before hinted, the ſame or a ſimilar achievement, abſtracted from political conſequences, is attributed to WILLYAM of CLOUDESLE', a celebrated

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celebrated archer of our own country; a country then and at all times remarkable for ſuperior ſkill and dexterity in the uſe of the bow, which even at this day is a favourite exerciſe. Our ancient minſtrels abound with ſtories of ſuch extraordinary feats; and whoever is acquainted with legendary writ will have no difficulty in believing, that the ſplitting of a hazel rod at four hundred yards diſtance, and ſtriking an apple off a child's head at ſix ſcore, are perfectly in the ſtyle and taſte of the times, and were but two arrows from the ſame quiver.

The ſuperb Edition of the Works of HORATIO WALPOLE, Earl of Orford, in Five Volumes Royal Quarto, by the ROBINSONS, &c. London, this preſent year, (1798,) does honour to the ſpirit and induſtry of the publiſhers. In the 1ſt vol. appears the Tragedy of the Myſterious Mother, the offspring of that nobleman's pen, though not before publicly avowed, ſucceeded by a Poſtſcript of conſiderable length, from which the following ſtory of the Tragedy is extracted and given in the Author's own words, pp. 125, 6, which, contraſted with the ſubſequent accounts, taken from publications of more rare and difficult acceſs, will doubtleſs afford a gratification to curioſity, and proportionally contribute to the pleaſure of the peruſal:

"I had heard, when very young, that a gentlewoman, under uncommon agonies of mind, had waited on Archbiſhop TILLOTSON, and beſought his counſel. A damſel that had ſerved her, had, many years before, acquainted her that ſhe was importuned by the gentlewoman's ſon to grant him a private meeting. The Mother ordered the maiden to make the aſſignation, when ſhe ſaid ſhe would diſcover herſelf, and reprimand him for his criminal paſſion; but, being hurried away by a much more criminal paſſion herſelf, ſhe kept the aſſignation without diſcovering herſelf. The fruit of this horrid

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horrid artifice was a daughter, whom the gentlewoman cauſed to be educated very privately in the country; but proving very lovely, and being accidentally met by her Father-brother, who never had the ſlighteſt ſuſpicion of the truth, he had fallen in love with, and actually married her. The wretched guilty Mother learning what had happened, and diſtracted with the conſequence of her crime, had now reſorted to the Archbiſhop to know in what manner ſhe ſhould act. The prelate charged her never to let her ſon and daughter know what had paſſed, as they were innocent of any criminal intention. For herſelf, he bade her almoſt deſpair!

"Sometime after I had finiſhed the play on this groundwork, a gentleman to whom I had communicated it, accidentally diſcovered the origin of the tradition in the novels of the Queen of Navarre, Vol. II. Novel 30; and to my ſurpriſe I found a ſtrange concurrence of circumſtances between the ſtory as there related, and as I had adapted it to my piece: for, though I believed it to have happened in the reign of King William, I had, for a purpoſe to be mentioned hereafter, thrown it back to the eve of the Reformation; and the Queen, it appears, dates the event in the reign of Louis XI. I had choſen Narbonne for the ſcene,—the Queen places it in Languedoc. The rencontres are of little importance, and, perhaps, curious to nobody but the author.

"In order to make uſe of a canvas ſo ſhocking, it was neceſſary as much as poſſible to palliate the crime, and raiſe the character of the criminal. To attain the former end, I imagined the moment in which ſhe has loſt a beloved huſband, when grief and diſappointment, and a conflict of paſſions might be ſuppoſed to have thrown her reaſon off its guard, and expoſed her to the danger under which ſhe fell. Strange as the moment may ſeem for vice to have ſeized

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ſeized on her, ſtill it makes her leſs hateful than if ſhe had coolly meditated ſo foul a crime. I have alſo endeavoured to make her very fondneſs for her huſband in ſome meaſure the cauſe of her guilt." . . . So far our Rt. Hon. Dramatiſt.

In the pamphlet publiſhed by GEORGE FAULKNER, which was reprinted from a London Edition of the ſame year, 1751, an account of which is given in the 5th volume of the Monthly Review, p. 317, it is ſaid that the narrative was intended for publication in the year 1685, and thus the writer introduces his extraordinary Tale:

" The following little hiſtory of the tranſactions of a private family, I ſhould not have undertaken to offer to the public, but from the ſurpriſingneſs of the facts, and my intimacy in the family, by whom the moſt minute paſſages were, in confidence, entruſted to my ſecrecy, from the very beginning to the enſuing cataſtrophe; of which I was but too late a ſpectator; as alſo from a particular inclination I have, that mankind beholding the dreadful conſequences of vice in others, may form the ſtronger guards againſt any ſubmiſſion to it in themſelves: For the enſuing narration will, to demonſtration, prove, that no one can poſſibly limit the proceſs of an ill act once commenced; and that the only way to avoid bad conſequences is, to afford no cauſe for them; for one enormity, though ever ſo privately committed, fails not, for the moſt part, to draw after it ſuch a ſucceſſion of evils as is very difficult to ſet bounds to." . . . . The whole narrative runs to the length of forty-eight octavo pages.

The author gives the ſtory under fictitious names, becauſe, he ſays, ſeveral of the deſcendants of the parties are ſettled near the ſcene of action, innocent of the facts.

Eugenio, who is deſcribed in all reſpects a finiſhed gentleman, endowed with every perſonal and mental accompliſhment, he ſays, was the younger ſon of an illuſtrious family in the

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the northern parts of SCOTLAND. He was very early initiated into the army, where, at the age of twenty-eight, he ranked as a Captain, and falling in love with a young heireſs of ſuperior beauty and fortune, he paid his addreſſes to her, and a marriage was in a ſhort time concluded. But he had but juſt time to behold his own image in a ſon ſhe brought him, when he was commanded off, and fell at the ſiege of the fort of St. Martin's, in the Iſle of Ree. The beautiful and diſconſolate widow, Eleanora, as ſhe is called, diſcharged every duty of an excellent mother to her ſon, named Oreſtes, and having liberally beſtowed on him every advantage of previous inſtitution, at a proper age he was ſent to the Univerſity of GLASGOW.

Towards the latter end of the firſt year, at a time of vacation, he returned home on a viſit to his Mother, who in his abſence had taken into her family a gentleman's daughter, called Arene, as her companion. The young collegian grew enamoured with her beauty, and left no means untried to ſeduce her, and one night found means of getting into her bed-chamber, but without effecting his purpoſe, as happily ſhe had time to conceal herſelf. The young lady diſcloſed the affair to her patroneſs, who highly approved and commended her conduct; but ſuppoſing, for very obvious reaſons, under ſuch circumſtances, her ſon would deny the charge, and if wholly unnoticed would probably repeat his attempt, ſhe bethought herſelf of a ſtratagem, wholly devoid of any evil intention on her part, to detect the young ſpark, and cure him of his pranks. "I myſelf," ſays ſhe, "will this night take up with your bed, while you lie ſecure in mine: I'll ring ſuch a peal in the amorous ſpark's ears, when I have him there, as ſhall deter him from any ſimilar attempt in any family, I'll warrant you."

The young gentleman taking ſilence for a ſort of conſent, was thus encouraged to purſue his deſign, and far from the ſneaking

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ſneaking attack which he had made the night before, ruſhed, *ſans ceremonie*, at once into her bed. It was a fatal moment. The Mother, confounded with the untowardneſs of her ſituation, had not power to remonſtrate, and, overcome by the youthful ardour that embraced her, fell a victim to his deſires.

The dreadful conſequences need not be repeated, though detailed more circumſtantially in the pamphlet before us, they are ſufficiently made known in the preceding relation; but ſurely the noble author of the tragedy, had no occaſion to reſort to ſo "ſtrange a moment," as he has choſen, contrary to the narrative, for the perpetration of the horrid act; when the other, equally as critical, would as well have ſerved his purpoſe, and would have been, if we dare apply the phraſe, more natural.

The beautiful daughter of this inceſtuous intercourſe, who was afterwards married to her own Father, is in the hiſtory named Cornelia, by whom he had ſeveral children, and being a Colonel in the infantry, at the Reſtoration, once more encountered Arene, his Mother's former ward, at an election ball in Pontefract, by which unfortunate meeting the denouement was caſually brought about, which terminated as might be expected, tragically enough.

For the reader's farther inſtruction and amuſement we will now turn to another ſcarce volume,

DUCTOR DUBITANTIUM, or the Rule of Conſcience, &c.

The ſecond edition, by Jeremy Taylor, Chaplain in Ordinary to King Charles the Firſt, and late Biſhop of Down and Connor, London, printed by Roger Norton, for Richard Boyſton, &c. 1671, with a Dedication to the King, and a Preface, dated "From my ſtudy in Portmore, Kilultagh, October 5th, 1659." In which an extraordinay caſe of human frailty we find ſtated as follows. The ſcene of action, as appears by the context, in VENICE.

"3. If

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" 3. If the error be invincible, and the conſequent of the Perſwaſion be conſidered with the State of Grace, the error muſt be opened or not opened according to prudent conſiderations relating to the perſon and his ſtate of affairs. So that the error muſt rather be ſuffered then a grievous ſcandal, or an intolerable, or a very great inconvenience. To this purpoſe COMITOLUS ſays it was determined by a congregation of learned and prudent perſons, in anſwering to a ſtrange and a rare caſe happening in VENICE; a gentleman did ignorantly lie with his Mother; ſhe knew it but intended it not, 'till for her curioſity and in her ſearch whether her ſon intended it to her maid, ſhe was ſurpriſed and gotten with child: She perceiving her ſhame and ſorrow haſten, ſent her ſon to travel for many years; and he returned not till his Mother's female birth was grown to be a handſome pretty maiden. At his return he eſpies a ſweet fac'd girl in the houſe, likes her, loves her, and intends to marry her. His Mother conjured him by all that was ſacred and prophane that he ſhould not, ſaying, ſhe was a beggar's child, whom for pitie's ſake ſhe reſcued from the ſtreet, and beggary, and that he ſhould not by diſhonouring his family, make her die with ſorrow. The gentleman's affections were ſtrong, and not to be maſtered, and he married his own ſiſter and daughter. But now the bitings of his Mother's conſcience were intolerable, and to her confeſſor ſhe diſcovered the whole buſineſs within a year or two after this prodigious marriage, and aſked whether ſhe was bound to reveal the caſe to her ſon and daughter, who now lived in love and ſweetneſs of ſociety innocently, though with ſecret misfortune which they felt not. It was concluded negatively; ſhe was not to reveal it, leſt ſhe bring an intolerable miſery in the place of that which to them was no ſin, or at leaſt upon notice of the error they might be tempted by their mutual endearment and

and common children, to cohabit in deſpight of the caſe, and ſo change that into a known ſin, which before was unknown calamity; and by this ſtate of the anſwer they were permitted to their innocence, and the children to their inheritance, and all under the protection of a harmleſs, though erring and miſtaken conſcience.

Book I. chap. iii. ſect. iii. p. 89.

Comitolus and the Queen of Navarre are not forth coming, ſo for the preſent the particulars of their teſtimony muſt be diſpenſed with, and the German author, who as well as the Engliſhman, wot ye, ſpeaks from his own knowlege, though formerly of our company, has abſconded. The only material difference between his and the preceding account is, that the German vouches for the authenticity of his relation as of a matter of public notoriety at PRAGUE, in a family of his own particular acquaintance there. . . . Powers of Veracity! how long, by ignorance, knavery and ſheer conceit, is the fond ſuffering world to be trifled with and impoſed upon? . . . But to the eternal diſgrace of the Illuminati, Philoſophers, Politicians, and Reformers of the Eighteenth Century, this monſtrous fabrication has been made the ground work of an atrocious calumny, meanly and induſtriouſly circulated in the common news papers, to blacken the character of the unfortunate Maria Antonietta of France! . . . . And to the ſcandal of common honeſty and common ſenſe, all party buſineſs out of the queſtion, there are ſome flaming . . . . Virtuous Souls no doubt! . . . who affect to credit the horrid aſperſion.

On our peep into Germany, caſting an eye towards Prague, the name of their Poet BURGHER, and the tale of LEONORA occurred. It has been tranſlated into Engliſh by four ſeveral hands. One of thoſe writers, in the preface to his own verſion of that Popular Poem, expatiating on the peculiar

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character and taſte of the Germans, ſays, " their minds vigorouſly conceive, and their language nobly expreſſes, the terrible and majeſtic; and it muſt be allowed that in this ſpecies of writing they would force from us the palm of excellence, were it not ſecured by the impregnable towers of OTRANTO. Of all their productions of this kind, LEONORA is perhaps the moſt perfect. The ſtory in a narrow compaſs unites a tragic event, poetical ſurpriſe, and epic regularity. The admonitions of the Mother are juſt, although ill-timed; the deſpair of the Daughter at once natural and criminal; her puniſhment dreadful and equitable. Few objections can be made to a ſubject new, ſimple and ſtriking; and none to a moral, which cannot be too frequently and awfully enforced."

This is the common language of tranſlators, in humble imitation of their great predeceſſor Dryden, obliquely recommending their own performances; and yet, admitting the tranſlator ſpoke his real ſentiments, concerning that popular and celebrated Production, his deciſion appears liable to many cogent exceptions. Without reference to Religious principles, conſidered in a moral light it will appear defective; to a philoſophic eye abſurd. The ſcope and tendency of it are of a miſchievous nature. It may make the hair of the weak and credulous ſtand on end; the Infidel, who with rapture contemplates the wanton extravagancies of Jupiter, attends ancient cut-throats to the regions of Tartarus, and liſtens with avidity to the Legend of Proſerpine, of which LEONORA's is a tolerable Fac Simile,* feels ſhocked at the gloomy reveries of the Cloiſters, and in his fancied triumphs over ignorance and ſuperſtition,

* So Pluto ſeized of Proſerpine, convey'd
To Hell's tremendous gloom the affrighted maid;
There grimly ſmil'd, pleas'd with his beauteous prize,
Nor envy'd Jove his ſunſhine and his ſkies.
Addiſon's Cato, Act III. Scene 7th.
Vide Ovid. Metamorph. lib. 5. v. 391. De Proſerp.

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ſition, with his uſual airs of ſelf-ſufficiency, will be tempted to treat the machinery of our modern with a ſneer. In truth, the fiction is too violent; it out-herods Herod, and ſeems merely calculated to keep alive and propagate the exploded notions of ghoſts and hobgoblins to the great annoyance of poor children, whoſe ductile minds are liable to fearful impreſſions, which by the ſtrongeſt exertions of reaſon and good ſenſe are ſcarcely ever afterwards to be wholly obliterated.

The argument in favour of the poem from the leſſon of patience it is ſaid to contain is by no means concluſive; for being wholly founded in impoſture it neceſſarily loſes of its effect. There are alſo objections to it as a compoſition ariſing from the conduct of the machinery itſelf. The terrible graces, to which the poem of LEONORA owes ſo much of its popularity, though bodied forth by the exquiſite deſigns of the lady DIANA BEAUCLERC, in our humble apprehenſion, are not ſupported with a due degree of conſiſtency. It is not eaſy to determine the preciſe characteriſtics, and preſcribe limits for the conduct of Beings, with which no mortal has ever yet been perſonally in habits of familiarity; but according to the received ritual of Apparitions, the Ghoſt in queſtion, is not only forced ungraciouſly into the ſervice, but is made to aſſume powers to which, as a Ghoſt, he was utterly incompetent. If this poſition be tenable, we muſt beg leave to diſſent from the authority.... The poem is not perfect.

The initiated in the myſteries of "that undiſcovered country, from whoſe bourne no traveller returns," of which Homer, Virgil and Shakſpeare are the acknowleged Poetical High Prieſts, by no means admit ſuch "fatal viſions, ſenſible to feeling as to ſight;" neither has the notion as yet prevailed among the ſuperſtitious and the vulgar. The author of LEONORA, by an inexcuſable error, we may ſay, in the coſtume, has proceeded directly againſt the canon laws of their foundation, for

for the ſake, it ſhould ſeem, of a moral not clearly deducible, and probably but a ſecondary conſideration. Cauſe and effect ſhould reciprocally correſpond. Ghoſts are ſerious ſubjects, and ſhould not be rouſed from their everlaſting manſions on trivial errands; to point out where a pot of money lies interred, or check the frenzy of a love-ſick girl; but their imputed attributes are ſpecifically eſſential and not to be diſpenſed with. Here the Ghoſt of a dead Warriour, armed cap-a-pee, in mail of the ſame temper, mounted on the Ghoſt of a dead Charger, makes a progreſs of five hundred German miles, and under the ſhape of an affianced lover, cajoles a fond credulous female, good and lawful fleſh and blood, to quit her aged weeping mother and get up behind him: off he carries her, hurry-ſcurry, over hill, over dale, wood, waſte, bog and briar, the ſame journey back again, all in the ſpace of one ſhort night, every now and then ſoothing and encouraging her to ſit ſtill, with an equivocal aſſurance, beneath the dignity of a Ghoſt, of accommodating her in his camp bed, ſix boards and a ſheet, which in the upſhot proves to be .... his grave. And that is the poor creature's puniſhment for uttering a raſh, a wicked expreſſion if you will (exaggerated we may ſuppoſe) in the paroxyſms of inſanity, the effect of her fidelity and conſtancy; virtues which the men, though little they have to brag of, will ſeldom allow the ſex, and ſurely this is a ſad way of inculcating. Thus the order of nature is ſubverted; the ſecrets of the grave prophaned, and a tremendous apparatus, as if the fate of nations depended on it, exhibited, for what? To frighten an innocent young maniac, and ſend her a little before her time to "Heaven:" But the pious and diſconſolate Mother, without crime bereft of her child, the ſtaff of her age, is the ſufferer: and the Ghoſt not, as we are taught to believe, a mere viſionary eſſence; but, contrary to all known principles of orthodoxy, a firm, corporeal, tangeable

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tangeable ſubſtance, veſted with human powers, and retaining as in life the old ſpirit of gallantry with the uſual accompaniments, prevarication and deceit.

The frigid criticiſm this may be deemed of a cold and phlegmatic heart. Not ſo; with deference to ſuperiour underſtandings, it is the unbiaſſed opinion of an enemy to every ſpecies of affectation, and empty ſentimentaliſm. It is the mature reſult of feeling and reflection, from an attentive conſideration of the ſubject, and a thorough conviction of the bad effects ſuch compoſitions are likely to produce. As a ſubject of poetical invention, it may be ſimple and ſtriking; ſimplicity and force employed to a good purpoſe are capital recommendations, and the charm of novelty palliates many defects; but on looking attentively nearer home, ſtrong proofs appear that, in this caſe at leaſt, powerfully impugn the claims of the author of LEONORA, if not to the palm of excellence, indiſputably to the honour of originality: and therefore more open to animadverſion.

"Godfrey Auguſtus Burgher, [Bürger] was born An. 1748, at Aſcherſleben. In 1779, was made the firſt collection of his poems. They conſiſt partly of ſongs, ſonnets, elegies, fables, and other ſhort pieces, comic and ſerious; and partly of ballads, many of which are tranſlated with improvements from *Engliſh Originals*. Simplicity is the characteriſtic of his compoſitions; and of all literary beauties ſimplicity muſt be the moſt generally attractive. It is no common merit to excel in a ſtyle which all underſtand, many admire, and but few can attain. No writer perhaps has ever attained a more decided popularity." The Poem of LEONORA is not given as a tranſlation or an imitation; it is given peremptorily and without reſerve as "an undoubted original, the moſt perfect in its kind." The writer therefore hazards his own title to taſte and diſcernment, who ventures to diſpute it; and to contradict

contradict the assertion unauthorized and at random, would be an act of unpardonable presumption.

A Collection of Old Ballads, corrected from the best and most ancient copies extant, (the Third Edition) London, MDCCXXVII, was published by J. Roberts, Warwick-lane, &c. which is quoted more than once by Dr. Percy, Bishop of Dromore, in his Reliques of Ancient English Poetry. The volume consists of 287 pages, containing forty-four favourite pieces; and if the reader's curiosity should prompt him to get the book, he will find our authority for the following Legend, [page 266] between which and LEONORA, there seems in many particulars so striking a resemblance, that considering the author's knowlege of English compositions, though in some circumstances the German may be perhaps an improvement, we can hardly suppose it to be an original.

XXXVIII. THE SUFFOLK MIRACLE: or, a Relation of a Young Man, who a month after his death appeared to his Sweetheart, and carry'd her on horseback behind him for forty miles in two hours, and was never seen after but in his grave.

A WONDER stranger ne'er was known
Than what I now shall treat upon.
In SUFFOLK there did lately dwell,
A farmer rich, and known full well:

He had a daughter fair and bright,
On whom he placed his whole delight;
Her beauty was beyond compare,
She was both virtuous and fair.

There was a young man living by,
Who was so charmed with her eye,
That he could never be at rest,
He was by love so much possest.

He

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He made addreſs to her, and ſhe,
Did grant him love immediately;
But when her father came to hear,
He parted her, and her poor dear.

Forty miles diſtant was ſhe ſent,
Unto his brother's, with intent
That ſhe ſhould there ſo long remain,
'Till ſhe had changed her mind again.

Hereat this young man ſadly griev'd,
But knew not how to be reliev'd;
He ſigh'd and ſob'd continually,
That his true love he could not ſee.

She by no means could to him ſend,
Who was her heart's eſpouſed friend;
He ſigh'd, he griev'd, but all in vain,
For ſhe confin'd muſt ſtill remain.

He mourn'd ſo much, that doctor's art,
Could give no eaſe unto his heart,
Who was ſo ſtrangely terrify'd,
That in ſhort time for love he dy'd.

She that from him was ſent away,
Knew nothing of his dying-day,
But conſtant ſtill ſhe did remain,
And lov'd the dead, altho' in vain.

After he had in grave been laid
A month or more, unto this maid
He came in middle of the night,
Who joy'd to ſee her heart's delight.

Her

Her father's horſe, which well ſhe knew,
Her mother's hood and ſafe-guard too,
He brought with him to teſtify,
Her parent's order he come by.

Which when her uncle underſtood,
He hop'd it would be for her good,
And gave conſent to her ſtraightway,
That with him ſhe ſhould come away.

When ſhe was got her love behind,
They paſs'd as ſwift as any wind,
That within two hours, or little more,
He brought her to her father's door.

But as they did this great haſte make,
He did complain his head did ake;
Her handkerchief ſhe then took out,
And ty'd the ſame his head about:

And unto him ſhe thus did ſay,
Thou art as cold as any clay;
When we come home a fire we'll have;
But little dream'd he went to grave.

Soon were they at her father's door
And after ſhe ne'er ſaw him more:
I'll ſet the horſe up, then he ſaid,
And there he left this harmleſs maid.

She knock'd, and ſtrait a man he cry'd
Who's there? 'Tis I, ſhe then reply'd;
Who wonder'd much her voice to hear,
And was poſſeſs'd with dread and fear.

Her

Her father he did tell, and then
He ſtar'd like an affrighted man;
Down ſtairs he ran, and when he ſee her,
Cry'd out, my child, how cam'ſt thou here?

Pray, ſir, did you not ſend for me,
By ſuch a meſſenger, ſaid ſhe;
Which made his hair ſtare on his head,
As knowing well that he was dead:

Where is he? then to her he ſaid,
He's in the ſtable, quoth the maid;
Go in, ſaid he, and go to bed,
I'll ſee the horſe well littered.

He ſtar'd about, and there could he
No ſhape of any mankind ſee;
But found his horſe all on a ſweat,
Which made him in a deadly fret.

His daughter he ſaid nothing to,
Nor none elſe, tho' full well they knew,
That he was dead a month before,
For fear of grieving her full ſore.

Her father to the father went
Of the deceas'd, with full intent
To tell him what his daughter ſaid;
So both came back unto the maid.

They aſk'd her, and ſhe ſtill did ſay,
'Twas he that then brought her away;
Which when they heard, they were amaz'd
And on each other ſtrangely gaz'd.

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A handkerchief ſhe ſaid ſhe ty'd
About his head; and that they try'd,
The ſexton they did ſpeak unto,
That he the grave would then undo:

Affrighted, then they did behold
His body turning into mould,
And though he had a month been dead,
The handkerchief was about his head.

This thing unto her then they told,
And the whole truth they did unfold;
She was thereat ſo terrifyed
And grieved, that ſhe quickly dyed.

Part not true love, you rich men then,
But if they be right honeſt men
Your daughters love, give them their way,
For force oft breeds their lives' decay.

Notwithſtanding all the high encomiums laviſhed on LEONORA, and the gorgeous attire in which ſhe was preſented to public notice, our SUFFOLK DAMSEL is not without her ſhare of attractions. "Thoughtleſs of beauty, ſhe is beauty's ſelf." LEONORA, a beauty at ſecond hand, and for the very graces in which ſhe moſt excels, ſhe is manifeſtly indebted to her rival; heightened with an additional tinge of rouge; in the opinion of thoſe who have a true taſte for the *ſimplex munditiis*, perhaps not to her advantage. In the article of diction there probably is no great diſparity; the ſeeming negligence ſometimes of the one, may ariſe from difference of time, and our familiarity with the language in which it is written; for the oppoſite reaſon, ſimilar blemiſhes in the other cannot be equally apparent. The correſpondence of ſound and ſenſe, for which the German has been diſtinguiſhed,

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guiſhed, is, no doubt, a prime ornament of metre, and gives life and ſpirit to poetic expreſſion; but carried to an extreme, however ſtriking the reſemblance, it is the reſemblance in caricature, and ceaſes to be beautiful. The genuine unaffected ſimplicity of our old Engliſh Ballad, depending not on the play of words, but on the conception, would bear tranſlation, and appear with advantage in any language, "where free to follow nature is the mode;" this is not the caſe with the German. The reiteration of *trap, trap, trap* for the ſound of a horſe's, or rather the ghoſt of a horſe's feet, and of *cling, cling, cling* for that of a door-bell, in Burgher's Poem, is mere mimickry, adapted to the vulgar ear, which in an Engliſh verſion, the tranſlator himſelf confeſſes, would appear ridiculous. Such mimic artifice, however the Engliſh Bard, introducing a real horſe, more naturally might have indulged, and yet judiciouſly has avoided. In the moral too, if the interpoſition of preternatural agency can be at all admitted, he has a manifeſt ſuperiority. The Suffolk Maiden, it is true, falls a ſacrifice; but it is an unblemiſhed, heroic ſacrifice to virtuous conſtancy: and in her loſs the parents receive the due puniſhment of their avarice and hard-heartedneſs, as a warning to parents in general, not to ſacrifice their children's real happineſs, as is but too often the caſe, to venal and ſelfiſh ends. .... Burgher, indeed, has had ample juſtice done him by his own countrymen, and, ſinging to the tune of "Over the hills and far away," has among us the recommendation of a foreigner; that was enough to gain him the palm of excellence, now embalmed for the admiration of future ages in the broad foliage of a royal quarto, and it is but juſtice to add, the charming pencil of a fair and noble lady, the happieſt efforts of the engraver's ſkill, combined with the exertions of the typographer, render it a curioſity of art, and enhance its merit in the eye of the connoiſſeur. Our old Suffolk Minſtrel "warbling his native wood notes wild,"

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wild," remains nameleſs and unnoticed. What an encouraging contraſt! 'tis a true epitome of the Hiſtory and Spirit of theſe wonderful times: and tho' his Ghoſt, after a requiem of near one hundred years, again reviſits the glimpſes of the moon, to aſſert his raviſhed honours, no man knows, or poſſibly cares, on whoſe temples to bind the palm of originality... "Reſt, reſt, perturbed ſpirit!" The ſame ſubject, diverſified with occaſional touches from Shakſpeare, has contributed to enrich the canvas of ſome of our latter noveliſts.

This preternatural expedition alſo ſeems anticipated in Scarron's comical Romance [pt. 1, ch. 24,] from which the German, as well as our Engliſh Legendiſt, might have taken the hint and collected materials. Deſtiny is the name of the French writer's hero, the lady of the piece is diſtinguiſhed by the appellation of Angelica: .....

'Twas midnight when Deſtiny in purſuit of Angelica, thinking to make a ſhort cut, ſtruck into a little miry narrow lane. He had not advanced many paces, when the Moon, which ſhone forth in full ſplendour, ſhrunk ſuddenly under a cloud, and the thick overſhadowing boughs, ruſtling on each ſide of the way, added not a little to its gloom and perplexity; his ſteed, having all theſe impediments to encounter, could by no means be prevailed on to ſecond the ardour of his wiſhes. In the midſt of his embarraſsment, inwardly execrating his ſituation, ſuddenly, to his infinite amazement, he perceived ſomething, like a man or a devil, leap up behind him, and claſp him about the neck. Deſtiny was immeaſurably alarmed, and his horſe ſo much ſtartled, that he would certainly have thrown his rider, had not the phantom, which inveſted him, kept him firm in the ſaddle. The horſe, taking fright, ran away with him; and Deſtiny, not knowing what he was about, continued goring him with his ſpurs, terrified with two naked arms about his neck, and cloſe

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cloſe at his cheek a cold face, breathing time to the cadence of his courſer's gallop. The race continued long without intermiſſion; for the lane proved not a ſhort one: at length, at the entrance of a wild heath, the horſe began to abate of his impetuoſity, and Deſtiny, recovering breath, gained a little reſpite to his agony; for cuſtom familiarizes every thing. The Moon broke from under the cloud, and darting her mild luſtre directly upon him, diſcovered, to the aſtoniſhed cavalier, an enormous figure of a man ſtark naked at his ſhoulder, with a horrid countenance, grinning in his face. This was no time for curioſity, he had no deſire to aſk queſtions, but clapping ſpurs to his horſe, urged him on at full ſpeed, till the animal, quite jaded, began to breathe ſhort and thick. In an inſtant, wholly unexpected, the ſtrange companion ſlipt from behind him to the ground, and fell a laughing. Deſtiny nevertheleſs preſſed forward, and turning his head about, ſaw the phantom making off with great rapidity towards the place whence he came. This Deſtiny afterwards diſcovered to be . . . . a poor wandering Madman in one of his nocturnal excurſions from the adjacent village.

Whoever has read thoſe amuſing tales, called the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, and recollects the fifth voyage of Sinbad the Sailor, may poſſibly recognize in Scarron's Madman ſtrong features of that wonderful adventurer's OLD MAN OF THE SEA, which, from the cuſtom of oriental moraliſts and other local conſiderations, ſuppoſing the fiction not deſtitute of foundation in reality, anſwers very nearly to the deſcription modern voyagers and naturaliſts give of the OURAN-OUTANG, the oſtenſible link between the human and mere animal ſpecies. This alſo induces a warrantable and fair concluſion, that, as the Europeans were never ſcrupulous in ſeizing, and converting to their own purpoſes, the gems and trophies of the Eaſt, the Suffolk Damſel, the Madman of Scarron,

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Scarron, and the Leonora of Burgher, are all but branches of the ſame family of Indian extraction.

The Arabian and French writer, as to the Fable, have both evidently the advantage of the German; for they have nature and probability on their ſide. Sinbad's and Deſtiny's adventures combine the terrible graces which arreſt the attention of the Reader in the tale of Leonora, and keep the mind in no leſs a degree of agitation and ſuſpenſe to the end. And the novelty of the ſurpriſe, which could neither be foreſeen nor expected, in the denouement, gives it a ſeaſonable relief, abſtracted from the danger of falſe impreſſions juſtly to be apprehended from the other; for which no moral founded in impoſture can make amends. On a comparative view, a reader of no very ſlippant conception, by a riſible aſſociation of ideas, might eaſily convert the preternatural machinery of the German ſtory into burleſque; for the relief of many an ingenuous and timid mind on all ſuch extravagant ſuppoſitions, however popular, "a conſummation devoutly to be wiſhed."

THE END.

DUBLIN,
Sept. 17, 1798.

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OMISSIONS.

THE Theory of ANIMAL MAGNETISM, a recent Impoſture, which has given occaſion to a variety of Philoſophic Inveſtigation, and furniſhed matter for a very laughable Farce, has its origin in the natural hiſtory of the Torpedo and Electrical Eel.* It was a matter of ſpeculation ſet afloat by a cunning French Philoſopher of the medical tribe, in purſuit of notoriety, which he contrived to render ſubſervient to the purpoſes of his vanity and his purſe, giving it ſomething of oracular eclat, by a dexterous combination of the deſcriptions left by Virgil, Ovid, Lucan, and others, of certain Prieſteſſes, whoſe prophetic throes and hyſteric affections in caſes of conſultation are admirably exemplified and illuſtrated by the magnetized damſels and matrons of the preſent æra. For the ſex, among the ancients as well as moderns, have, by the artful and deſigning, been generally found convenient inſtruments as well as dupes of impoſition; even within the narrow ſphere of our own obſervation, there are not wanting females of curioſity and enterprize, who, in the rage for Animal Magnetiſm, ſtarted forth candidates, and having gone through the previous gradations, awakened from their delirium, to ſpeak in the language of the adepts, ſurpriſed with the luminous Criſis. Giraldus commonly called Cambrenſis, a native of Wales and Biſhop of St. David's, in his Itinerary publiſhed towards the cloſe of the 12th century, gives a picture of the extacies of certain Welſh enthuſiaſts, ſo nearly reſembling the phenomena attending Animal Magnetiſm, that the one, with ſome trifling verbal modifications, ſeems merely a copy of the other under a different deſignation. Thoſe who are yet ſtrangers to this ſpecies of illuſion will find an abſtract of the paſſage from Giraldus Cambrenſis, in

* For a very full and clear account of the Torpedo and Electrical Eel, ſee Cavallo on Electricity.

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in Warrington's Hiſtory of Wales, 4to, London, 1782, 2d Edition, pp. 102, 3.

"There were amongſt the Welſh certain perſons whom they called *Awenydhion*, a word expreſſive of poetical raptures. Theſe perſons, when conſulted about any thing doubtful, inflamed with a high degree of enthuſiaſm, were to all appearance carried out of themſelves, and ſeemed as if they were poſſeſſed by an inviſible ſpirit; yet they did not declare a ſolution of the difficulty required, but by the power of wild and inconſiſtent circumlocution, in which they abounded, any perſon who obſerved the anſwer would at length, by ſome turn or digreſſion in the ſpeech, receive, or fancy they did, an explanation of what was ſought. From this ſtate of extacy they were at laſt rouſed as from a deep ſleep, and were compelled, as it were, by the violence of others, to return to their natural ſtate. Another thing, it is ſaid, was peculiar to theſe perſons; that when they recovered their reaſon they did not recollect any of thoſe things which in their extacy they had uttered. And if it happened that they were again conſulted about the ſame or any other thing, they would be certain to expreſs themſelves in other and far different words. This property was beſtowed upon them, as they fancied, in their ſleep; at which time, according to Giraldus, it appeared to ſome of them as if new milk or honey was poured into their mouths; to others, as if a written ſcroll had been put into their mouths; and on their awaking, they publicly profeſſed that they had been endowed with theſe extraordinary gifts. This imaginary ſpirit of divination, has been alſo in much uſage in the Highlands of Scotland, and is there known under the expreſſive term of SECOND SIGHT."

MASQUERADES, which are by moſt people imagined peculiar to the moderns, and excluſively confined to Europe, were

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were in requeſt among the Iſraelites; and, let not the minds of the pious and well-diſpoſed revolt at the aſſertion, mention is made of them in the Scriptures; not, you may be ſatisfied, in the way of encouraging them, but wholly in reprobation of the folly and indiſcretion of indulging a propenſity to amuſements of their ſeductive and immoral influence.

Dramatic Writers do not plume themſelves on a ſtrict adherence to genuine hiſtory; what is called poetic probability is all they look to, and in a general way, little more is required: Their buſineſs is to delineate character, and diverſify their ſcenes, ſo as to intereſt and affect their auditors; not to eſtabliſh facts. On this principle, the liberties Dryden has taken in his tragedy of Don Sebaſtian, are agreeable to uſage, and ſtand ſo far excuſed. The proſe writer who relates a ſtory, is bound by a ſeverer law, and as an hiſtorian, ſhould confine himſelf to the truth. The accurate and judicious pen of Mr. Addiſon, has been miſguided, by a ſprightly French writer, it ſeems, in relation to Muley Moluc, a principal character of that play. [Spectator, vol. v. No. 349.] As the ſtory is happily calculated to amuſe, as well as inſtruct, the chief object we have had in view throughout theſe pages, our Readers will perhaps be pleaſed to ſee the account of the African Monarch, as Mr. Addiſon gives it, contraſted with what we have reaſon to believe the true hiſtory of the ſame event.

"I ſhall conclude this paper with the inſtance of a perſon who ſeems to me to have ſhewn more intrepidity and greatneſs of ſoul in his dying moments, than what we meet with among any of the moſt celebrated Greeks and Romans. I met with this inſtance in the Hiſtory of the Revolutions in Portugal, written by the Abbot de Vertot.

When Don Sebaſtian, King of Portugal, had invaded the territories of Muli Moluc, Emperor of Morocco, in order to

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dethrone him, and ſet the crown upon the head of his nephew, Moluc was wearing away with a diſtemper which he himſelf knew was incurable. However, he prepared for the reception of ſo formidable an enemy. He was indeed ſo far ſpent with his ſickneſs, that he did not expect to live out the whole day, when the laſt deciſive battle was given; but knowing the fatal conſequences that would happen to his children and people, in caſe he ſhould die before he put an end to that war, he commanded his principal officers that, if he died during the engagement, they ſhould conceal his death from the army, and that they ſhould ride up to the litter in which his corpſe was carried, under pretence of receiving orders from him as uſual. Before the battle began, he was carried through all the ranks of his army in an open litter, as they ſtood drawn up in array, encouraging them to fight valiantly, in defence of their religion and country. Finding afterwards the battle to go againſt him, though he was very near his laſt agonies, he threw himſelf out of his litter, rallied his army, and led them on to the charge; which afterwards ended in a complete victory on the ſide of the Moors. He had no ſooner brought his men to the engagement, but, finding himſelf utterly ſpent, he was again replaced in his litter, where laying his finger on his mouth, to enjoin ſecrecy to his officers, who ſtood about him, he died a few moments after in that poſture."

The following relation is extracted from an account of a Journey to Mequinez, the reſidence of the preſent Emperor of Morocco, on the occaſion of Commodore Stewart's embaſſy thither, for the redemption of the Britiſh captives in the year 1721, by John Windus; London, printed by Jacob Tonſon, 1728. The Author in his preface, ſpeaking of his work, ſays: "As I had the honour to attend Mr. Stewart into the Emperor of Morocco's dominions, I continued in thoſe

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thoſe parts, between three and four months, which time I employed in gathering ſuch materials as encouraged me to proceed in the following work: and in this I have been particularly careful, not to deliver any thing, but what either came under my own obſervation, or was ſupported by authorities not to be doubted of," &c. &c. This writer's account of the battle of Don Sebaſtian, [pp. 73, 4, 5, 6.] runs thus: " The 18th [June] we decamped between five and ſix in the morning, and paſſed the river *Elmahaſien*, famous for the battle fought between Don Sebaſtian King of Portugal, and the Moors; as this ſtory had given matter to Sir Richard Steele,* to furniſh the world with a paper of the heroical virtue of Muley Moluc, then king of Morocco, it gave me the curioſity to enquire, whether they had any hiſtorical account thereof; but found only a traditional ſtory, which moſt of them agreed in, differing much from Sir Richard Steele, who gives the praiſe of heroick virtue to the Mooriſh king, whereas the ſtory of the country attributes it to a ſlave; for Muley Moluc was a prince very much beloved by his people, but infirm, and at the time he left Morocco, to defend his country againſt Don Sebaſtian, was ſo ill, that he was forced to be carried in a litter, and when he came to Alcaſſar, (about ſix miles from the place where the battle was fought) he there died; upon which a ſlave of his called Mirwan, (whoſe name the

* Sir Richard Steele, the conductor and oſtenſible Author of the Spectator. It is now univerſally known Sir Richard was not the ſole writer of that elegant and uſeful periodical paper. It was the joint production of ſeveral hands, the moſt eminent wits of the time, whoſe papers are reſpectively diſtinguiſhed by certain private ſignatures agreed on for the purpoſe. Mr. Addiſon was a liberal contributor to that work, as well as the Tatler and Guardian. His ſignature was one of the letters in the word CLIO, and by the particular letter of that word occaſionally affixed, not only the writer, but his particular place of reſidence at the time, is pointed out. Thus the paper alluded to, muſt be aſcribed not to Sir R. Steele, but to his friend and coadjutor Mr. Addiſon, then reſiding at his houſe in London, as we are taught to underſtand by the ſignature L.

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the Moors, to this day, mention with great regard, becauſe of the gallantry and ſervice of the action) wiſely conſidering the conſequence of keeping ſecret the death of a prince ſo well beloved by his people, at a time when the two armies every day expected to join battle, contrived it ſo, as to give out orders for the king, as if he had been alive, making believe he was better than he uſed to be, till the battle was over; when the ſaid ſlave (thinking he merited a better reward than what he met with) wiſhed the Succeſſor joy, both of the victory and empire; but the ungrateful Prince cauſed him to be immediately put to death, ſaying, he had robbed him of the glory of the action. The Portugueſe who were diſperſed in the battle, would not believe that their king was ſlain, but ran up and down the country, crying out, *Onde eſta el Rey* (i. e.) *Where is the King?* the Moors often hearing the word *Rey*, which in Arabick ſignifies *Good ſenſe*; told them, that if they had any *Rey*, they had never come thither.

Many of the ordinary people in Portugal will not perſuade themſelves, that Don Sebaſtian is yet dead: And there is now to be read on a monument in the great church of Bellem, near Liſbon, the following inſcription:

Hoc jacet in tumulo, ſi fama eſt vera, Sebaſtes."

Mr. Boſwell obſerves, and his obſervation is juſt, that it is the indiſpenſable duty of every writer to be exact in his quotations. The diſtorted, mutilated, and ſpurious authorities diſingenuouſly palmed upon their readers by Voltaire, Hume, Gibbon, and their diſciples, to ſerve their inſidious purpoſes, would fill volumes, and have been abundantly expoſed. Writers of a very different caſt, without any premeditated intention to deceive, have fallen into great inaccuracies in this reſpect, which ſhould be an admonition to readers of all deſcriptions, not to pin their faith on authorities at ſecond hand, when they can reſort to the originals.

The

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The Spectator, [vol. vi. No. 438.] in his animadverſions on a paſſionate diſpoſition has the following paſſage:*

" If you would ſee paſſion in its purity, without mixture of reaſon, behold it repreſented in a mad Hero, drawn by a mad Poet. Nat Lee, makes his Alexander ſay thus:

" Away, begone, and give a whirlwind room,
" Or I will blow you up like duſt! avaunt;
" Madneſs but meanly repreſents my toil.
" Eternal diſcord!
" Fury! revenge! diſdain and indignation!
" Tear my ſwoln breaſt, make way for fire and tempeſt.
" My brain is burſt, debate and reaſon quench'd;
" The ſtorm is up, and my hot bleeding heart
" Splits with the rack, while paſſions like the wind,
" Riſe up to heaven, and put out all the ſtars."

Every paſſionate fellow in town talks half the day with as little conſiſtency, and threatens things as much out of his power." The whole paper well deſerves to be read; but there is not one word of the rant there cited, in the part of Alexander: It belongs to quite another perſonage, and is beſides incorrectly given. In the third act of the Rival Queens, where Roxana, Caſſander, and Polipercon are the interlocutors, it is Roxana, chafed by thoſe odious archtraitors, who thus exhibits the picture of female fury:

Away, begone, and give a whirlwind room,
Or I will blow you up like duſt; avaunt:
Madneſs but meanly repreſents my toil.
Roxana and *Statira*, they are names
That muſt for ever jar; eternal diſcord,
Fury, revenge, diſdain and indignation
Tear my ſwoll'n breaſt, make way for fire and tempeſt.
My brain is burſt, debate and reaſon quench'd,

The

* This paper has the ſignature T. aſcribed to Sir Richard Steele.

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The ſtorm is up, and my hot-bleeding heart
Splits with the rack, while paſſions like the winds
Riſe up to heaven, and put out all the ſtars.
What ſaving hand, O what almighty arm
Can raiſe me ſinking?

Rival Queens, 4to. 5th Edit. London 1704.

Bell in his edition [Edinburgh printed by the Martins 1782.] has given the angry Queen three lines modeled upon theſe, in a leſs extravagant ſtrain; the reſt are wholly omitted.

We have an inſtance of a ſimilar miſtake in the third volume of the Spectator, No. 241, the ſubject is the Abſence of lovers. * The paſſage in view runs thus:

"ABSENCE is what the poets call death in love, and has given occaſion to abundance of beautiful complaints in thoſe authors who have treated of this paſſion in verſe. OVID's Epiſtles are full of them. Otway's Monimia talks very tenderly upon this ſubject."

——————— "It was not kind
"To leave me like a turtle, here alone,
"To droop and mourn the abſence of my mate.
"When thou art from me every place ſeems deſert,
"And I, methinks, am ſavage and forlorn.
"Thy preſence only 'tis can make me bleſt,
"Heal my unquiet mind and tune my ſoul."

Orphan, Act II. Scene the laſt.

It is not Monimia, but Caſtalio that talks thus tenderly:

Caſt. Monimia, my angel! 'twas not kind
To leave me like a turtle here alone,
To droop and mourn the abſence of my mate.
When thou art from me every place is deſert, &c.
Mon. Oh! the bewitching tongues of faithleſs men!
'Tis thus the falſe hyæna, &c.

Mr.

* The paper is diſtinguiſhed with a C. which is one of the letters uſed by Mr. Addiſon, implying that it was written at *Cheliea*.

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Mr. Sheridan, who, one ſhould think, could not be miſtaken in a quotation from a play, in which he had performed times without number, and on whoſe authority one might be tempted to lay a wager, gives us the following paſſage in his Lectures on Elocution. [Lect. IV. on Emphaſis.]*

" By means of Emphaſis what paſſes in the mind is often ſhewn in a few words, which otherwiſe would require great circumlocution. Of which take the following inſtance from the Play of All for Love:

——————————— " The fault was mine
" To place thee there, where only, thou, couldſt fail."

" In this ſcene Anthony, having found out that his friend Dolabella, whom he had employed on a commiſſion to Cleopatra, inſtead of diſcharging the truſt repoſed in him, had ſuffered his own paſſion for that dangerous beauty ſo far to prevail, as to give up his friend's cauſe, and urge his own love-ſuit to her; at firſt upbraids Dolabella in the bittereſt terms for his treachery. But afterwards when he cools," &c.

Again in the ſucceeding Lecture [Lect. V. on Pauſes and Stops.]* He quotes the ſame line with a ſecond comment upon it, thus .... " And had they placed three commas in the line quoted from All for Love, as thus:

To place thee there, where only, thou, couldſt fail.——
The full import would have been at once perceived."

Theſe Lectures were ſeveral times delivered by himſelf to audiences conſiſting of four or five hundred at a time, and went through different editions: The firſt in quarto, and afterwards in octavo, corrected by himſelf, and no error was ever in the leaſt ſuſpected. On my undertaking the firſt Dublin edition, I turned to the play of All for Love; no ſuch paſſage was to be found in it; I conſulted Shakſpeare's Anthony

* Quarto edit. London, 1762, pp. 67, 8, and p. 81. Octavo edit. London, 1787, pp. 84, 5, and p. 102. It were to be wiſhed theſe were the only errors that diſgrace a ſpurious edition of Mr. Sheridan's Lectures printed in Dublin.

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Anthony and Cleopatra, which was the original, Dryden's being but an alteration from Shakſpeare, and was equally unſucceſsful: I mentioned the circumſtance to Mr. Sheridan; he laughed at my aſſertion, and inſiſted I had overlooked it; for it was impoſſible he could have committed ſuch a blunder. There it reſted; but one evening ſitting at Young's tragedy of the Revenge, it was the laſt time poor unfortunate Moſſop performed Zanga, I was ſurpriſed to hear the paſſage in diſpute addreſſed by Carlos to his friend Alonzo, not in a ſcene of reproach, but emulous generoſity, reſpecting Leonora, thus:

——————— The crime was mine,
Who plac'd thee there, where only thou could'ſt fail, &c.
Revenge, Act II.

If ſuch conſummate maſters, whom no man can ſuſpect of an intention to miſlead, are not exempt from errors, which in themſelves, it muſt be admitted, are of no great conſequence, ſhould we not be upon our guard in more important matters, and never truſt implicitly to quotations, even though Tom Paine himſelf ſhould ſtake his reputation on their fidelity? It may alſo afford a hint to our teſty diſputants, male and female, not raſhly to form concluſions, or trip up their modeſter opponents with borrowed authorities. Pope, who, maugre all the ſtrictures of faſtidious critics, is one of the beſt and moſt inſtructive poetic writers in any language, reprobates, with juſt ſeverity, the ſelf-ſufficiency of tenacious wranglers, and at the ſame time preſcribes a golden rule of conduct which all may reduce to practice with advantage:

Be ſilent always, when you doubt your ſenſe;
And ſpeak, though ſure, with ſeeming diffidence:
Some poſitive, perſiſting Fops we know,
Who if once wrong, will needs be always ſo;
But you, with pleaſure own your errors paſt,
And make each day a Critique on the laſt.

Though

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Though no reader of feeling and taſte can deny the Author of the Seaſons the due praiſe of being, on ſuitable occaſions, eminently pathetic, yet the affecting Epiſode of Celadon and Amelia has a recommendation which renders it peculiarly intereſting. It is founded in truth.* The circumſtances which a few years before unhappily occurred, though ſomewhat diſguiſed perhaps to conceal the obligation, are taken from Gay. Both were poets; but Gay has given the melancholy account of John Hewit and Sarah Drew, which is manifeſtly the original, in proſe; and, as a matter of taſte, it would be hard to determine which has the advantage. It is eaſy to perceive that Gay wrote from immediate impreſſions, and in his relation of that awful event he has left one of the fineſt examples of the epiſtolary ſtyle of writing in its kind that is to be met with in our language. Neither of thoſe writers can loſe much; the reader muſt be a gainer, by comparing them.

FROM MR. GAY TO MR. F———.

STANTON-HARCOURT, AUG. 9, 1718.

THE only news you can expect to have from me here, is news from Heaven, for I am quite out of the world, and there is ſcarce any thing can reach me except the noiſe of thunder, which undoubtedly you have heard too. We have read in old authors, of high towers levelled by it to the ground, while the humble vallies have eſcaped: The only thing that is proof againſt it is the laurel, which however I take to be no great ſecurity to the brains of modern authors. But to let you ſee that the contrary to this often happens, I muſt acquaint you that the higheſt and moſt extravagant heap of towers in the univerſe, which is in this neighbourhood, ſtands ſtill undefaced, while a cock of barley in our next field has been conſumed to aſhes. Would

* Thomſon's Summer, l. 1171; publiſhed in 1727, nine years after the Narrative of Gay.

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to God that this heap of barley had been all that had perifhed! For unhappily beneath this little fhelter fat two much more conftant lovers than ever were found in romance under the fhade of a beech-tree. John Hewit was a well-fet man of about five-and-twenty; Sarah Drew might be rather called comely than beautiful, and was about the fame age: They had paffed thro' the various labours of the year together with the greateft fatisfaction; if fhe milked, 'twas his morning and evening care to bring the cows to her hand. It was but laft fair that he bought her a prefent of green filk for her ftraw hat; and the poefy on her filver ring was of his chufing. Their love was the talk of the whole neighbourhood; for fcandal never affirmed that they had any other views than the lawful poffeffion of each other in marriage. It was that very morning that he had obtained the confent of her parents, and it was but 'till the next week that they were to wait to be happy. Perhaps in the intervals of their work they were now talking of their wedding-cloaths, and John was fuiting feveral forts of poppies and field-flowers to her complexion, to chufe her a knot for the wedding-day. While they were thus bufied (it was on the laft of July between two and three in the afternoon) the clouds grew black, and fuch a ftorm of lightning and thunder enfued, that all the labourers made the beft of their way to what fhelter the trees and hedges afforded. Sarah was frightened, and fell down in a fwoon on a heap of barley. John, who never feparated from her, fat down by her fide, having raked together two or three heaps, the better to fecure her from the ftorm. Immediately there was heard fo loud a crack, as if Heaven had fplit afunder; every one was folicitous for the fafety of his neighbour, and called to one another throughout the field. No anfwer being returned to thofe who called to our lovers, they ftepped to the place where they lay; they perceived the barley

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barley all in a ſmoke, and then 'ſpyed this faithful pair, John with one arm about Sarah's neck, and the other held over her, as to ſcreen her from the lightning. They were both ſtruck in this tender poſture. Sarah's left eyebrow was ſinged, and there appeared a black ſpot on her breaſt; her lover was all over black, but not the leaſt ſigns of life were found in either. Attended by their melancholy companions, they were conveyed to the town, and the next day interred in Stanton-Harcourt church-yard. My lord Harcourt, at Mr. Pope's and my requeſt, has cauſed a ſtone to be placed over them, upon condition that we ſhould furniſh the epitaph, which is as follows:

When Eaſtern lovers feed the funeral fire,
On the ſame pile the faithful pair expire;
Here pitying heaven that virtue mutual found,
And blaſted both that it might neither wound.
Hearts ſo ſincere th' Almighty ſaw well pleas'd,
Sent his own lightning, and the victims ſeiz'd.

But my lord is apprehenſive the country people will not underſtand this; and Mr. Pope ſays he'll make one with ſomething of Scripture in it, and with as little poetry as Hopkins and Sternhold.

Yours, &c.

JOHN GAY.

Thoſe who are deſirous of ſeeing on what narrow foundations a genius for the Drama can build a Tragedy, will do well to conſult the Guardian. The firſt volume of that work, No. 37, contains the relation of a ſcene of misfortunes which really happened ſome years ago in Spain. Short as the account is, it ſupplied Dr. Young with materials for his Tragedy of the Revenge; in which we may fairly preſume he had Othello in view, and aſpired to break a lance with Shakſpeare.

" Don

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" Don Alonzo, a Spaniſh nobleman, had a beautiful and virtuous wife, with whom he had lived for ſome years in great tranquillity. The gentleman, however, was not free from the faults uſually imputed to his nation; he was proud, ſuſpicious, and impetuous. He kept a Moor in his houſe, whom, on a complaint from his Lady, he had puniſhed for a ſmall offence with the utmoſt ſeverity. The Slave vowed revenge, and communicated his reſolution to one of the Lady's women, with whom he lived in a criminal way. This creature alſo hated her miſtreſs, for ſhe feared ſhe was obſerved by her; ſhe therefore undertook to make Don Alonzo jealous, by inſinuating that the gardener was often admitted to his Lady in private, and promiſing to make him an eye-witneſs of it. At a proper time agreed on between her and the Moriſco, ſhe ſent a meſſage to the gardener, that his Lady, having ſome haſty orders to give him, would have him come that moment to her in her chamber. In the mean time ſhe had placed Alonzo privately in an outer room, that he might obſerve who paſſed that way. It was not long before he ſaw the gardener appear. Alonzo had not patience; but, following him into the apartment, ſtruck him at one blow with a dagger to the heart; then dragging his Lady by the hair, without enquiring farther, he inſtantly killed her.

Here he pauſed, looking on the dead bodies with all the agitations of a dæmon of revenge; when the wench who had occaſioned theſe terrors, diſtracted with remorſe, threw herſelf at his feet, and in a voice of lamentation, without ſenſe of the conſequence, repeated all her guilt. Alonzo was overwhelmed with all the violent paſſions at one inſtant, and uttered the broken voices and motions of each of them for a moment, until at laſt he recollected himſelf enough to end his agony of love, anger, diſdain, revenge, and remorſe, by murdering the Maid, the Moor, and himſelf."

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ON THE ORIGIN OF

BÜRGER'S LEONORA,

FROM THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE,

1799.

The (two) following Letters were addreſſed to the Editor of a literary journal in London, with whoſe plan it is inconſiſtent to inſert articles of correſpondence: from him they were handed to us for publication. Our deſire to oblige the foreign author has prompted us to admit them: yet we conſider it as a mere queſtion of curioſity, whether Bürger's Ballad is in any degree a refaccimento: his merit is not diminiſhed by the pre-exiſtence of the ſtory. In the ſecond volume of Poems by Robert Southey, p. 145, may be found an extract from Matthew of Weſtminſter, relating a tale alſo occurring in Olaus Magnus and in the Nuremberg Chronicle, the cataſtrophe of which bears an obvious reſemblance to the ſtory of Lenore. This incident perhaps has been uſed by ſome Minneſinger, and has contributed its ſparkles to kindle the imagination of Bürger.

MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

DEAR SIR,

ON a ſhort excurſion to the Lower Rhine, I happened to ſtop for dinner at the poſt-houſe of *Glandorf*, a ſmall place in the biſhoprick of Oſnabruck.—Beſides my fellow-traveller, a gentleman of Valenciennes, there was no other company but a young chanoineſſe of the abbey of *Eſſen*, who was going on a viſit to her noble parents in the neighbourhood of Oſnabruck.—Dinner was ſerved, and the poſt-maſter, a Mr. *Cordes*,

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joined us, to do the honours of the table rather than to partake of the fare. My Frenchman had ſoon engaged in a converſation with the lady; and, *tandis qu'il pouſſoit ſa fortune*, I boarded the poſt-maſter, in whom I was agreeably ſurpriſed to meet with a man of learning, aſtoniſhingly well verſed both in Engliſh and German literature. He ſeemed pleaſed to hear that the latter had become more than ever familiar to the Engliſh reader. I mentioned ſundry good tranſlations to him, and when I happened to ſpeak of the late elegant edition of *Bürger's Leonora*, he could not refrain from ſaying, "I wiſh they had honoured the work with a leſs fine edition, and not accuſed the author of plagiariſm." Theſe words occaſioned a more minute enquiry. He inſiſted upon the fable being of Saxon origin, and offered to produce an old man, an inhabitant of the place, who would repeat nearly the whole poem in Low Dutch; adding that this man frequently heard it recited in his youth, by people ſtill older than himſelf, from whom he had learned it. My time would not permit me to ſtop for the man; but having told Mr. *Cordes* that I meant to come back by the ſame road, he had the goodneſs to promiſe me his opinion in writing concerning the origin of the fable; which, in fact, I found in readineſs when I arrived a ſecond time at Glandorf, and herewith I ſend you a tranſlation of it. You will as a patron of German literature find means of giving it publicity, and thereby remove the error into which the admirers of that truly beautiful Ballad have been led concerning its origin.

Your's, &c.

Hamburg, April 9, 1799. C. L.

AGREEABLY

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AGREEABLY to your kind requeſt I communicate to you with pleaſure, in writing all I know, and what I already have told you by word of mouth, concerning Bürger's Leonora, conſidered as a *popular tale in lower Saxony*. I do ſo with the greateſt ſatisfaction, as it confirms Bürger's own aſſertion: that an old Low-Dutch ballad furniſhed him with the idea of that piece, which aſſertion you will ſee ſtated in the German Mercury—(*der Deutſche Mercur*, ſect. 2. and in ſect. 4. of Mr. Schlegel) in contradiction to ſome Engliſh antiquarians, who ſay, that Bürger took his Leonora from a collection of old Ballads, publiſhed in London, in three volumes, in 1723, and in which the matter of that Poem is contained in a ſtory, entitled: *The Suffolk Miracle, or a Relation of a young Man, who a Month after his death appeared to his Sweetheart.*

I have often heard the tale repeated by ſundry perſons of this place; and among others by a man of the age of 75 years. A ſtill greater proof of its being a popular tale of Low Saxon origin, is its being ſo univerſally known in thoſe parts; and I heard it ſeveral times recited almoſt in the ſame manner by my ſtep-mother, who is 71 years old, lives in a place called Rheine, at five German miles diſtance from hence, in the biſhopric of Munſter, and aſſured me, that in her youth ſhe heard it often related by ſeveral people. The ſtory runs as follows:

The lover enliſts in the army, is killed, appears by night, gently rapping at the door of his ſweetheart. She aſks, Who's there? "*Dien leef is dar*," is his anſwer. She opens the door, gets behind him on his horſe; they gallop away in the ſwifteſt courſe. Then the ſwain ſays theſe identical words:

"*De mond, de ſchint ſo helle,*
De doden riet ſo ſchnelle.
Fiens Leevken gruvlt di ok?"
"*Wat ſcholl mi gruveln, du biſt ja by mi.*"

She

She replies. After they have been galloping for a good while, he makes up to a church-yard—The graves open; horſe and rider are ſwallowed up, and the woman is left behind in darkneſs and gloom.... "*Sapperment! en ſcholl ebn wual gruveln!*" will the old man add in his peculiar humour.

You ſee that the progreſs of the fable is the ſame as in Bürger's Leonora; and this very ſimilarity, nay this wordly ſimilarity, has with ſome raiſed a doubt about Bürger's aſſertion to Schlegel, viz. that he had taken merely a few hints from an old Saxon ballad.

Yet—that I may not injure our poet's known veracity and candour; I muſt ſay, that it appears pretty natural to me, that, on hearing the old ſtory related, Bürger immediately conceived the idea of his Leonora; and that afterwards, perhaps, after the lapſe of many years, he could not himſelf, diſtinctly recollect, and, in his ſtatement to his friend, ſeparate from his own fictions what originally belonged to the old tale. Whoever has made it his ſtudy to examine ſimilar productions, either taken from or built upon popular ſayings, will moſt certainly be of my opinion in this particular.

If even the whole ground-work of the poem were not of Bürger's own invention, it can however not be denied, that it has conſiderably gained under his hands: Leonora's frantic anguiſh when ſhe does not meet her lover among the returning warriors—the language of comfort of her mother—her contempt of the ſacrament, and her incredulity in its virtues, which motives the apparition—are not to be met in the oral tradition.

It appears, that the tale originally paſſed from mouth to mouth in rhyme and verſe, till in progreſs of time it entirely loſt that form.

The explanation of the reſemblance of our Tale with the *Suffolk Miracle* I muſt leave to you. Perhaps it is ſo old that the Saxons carried it over to England. For my part, I am fully

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fully ſatisfied that Bürger did not take his Poem from any Engliſh ballad, but from an old Low-Dutch tale; the more ſo, as Mr. Schlegel aſſures us, that Bürger in the ſtudy of the old Engliſh ballads confined himſelf almoſt excluſively to to *Percy's Reliques of Ancient Poetry*.

Glandorf. Your's, &c.

J. Francis Cordes.

TO

THE EDITOR OF

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

AUDI ALTERAM PARTEM.

SIR,

In your Magazine or Regiſter for September laſt, I obſerve a Letter, dated Hamburg, April 9th, 1799, and, connected with it, another as from Glandorf, of poſterior note, on the Origin of Bürger's Leonora; a ſubject which had engaged my Father's attention ſoon after the ſplendid edition of that Poem made its appearance; and early in the year 1798, his Remarks were committed to preſs.* The pages containing thoſe Remarks, together with other articles of information, which I find you have elſewhere adopted and converted to uſe, were upon a general principle, or I miſconceived you, with no uncandid or inimical intention, tranſmitted to your addreſs, ſome months previous to the publication in queſtion; but, as might eaſily be perceived on the face of them, they were by no means the whole of the work. As far as they go, they are in themſelves for ſo much complete; but though in the hands of

* See page 161, paſſim.

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of ſeveral ſelect friends in London, Edinburgh, Bath and Liverpool, as well as in Dublin, they have never been offered to the public eye; nor has the work, though in ſuch a ſtate of forwardneſs, even yet been advertized, owing to an accident, by which a conſiderable portion of the impreſſion was rendered uſeleſs, and certain delays on the part of the Printer, which could not conveniently be obviated. The writer of thoſe Letters, upon which I am about to hazard a few remarks, has, however, with peculiar addreſs, faſtened upon my Father's idea, and dexterouſly contrived a kind of indirect anſwer to his animadverſions, as it were by anticipation; for his critique, in various places, manifeſtly alluded to, is carefully kept out of ſight. This to me, I muſt confeſs, carries with it ſomething of unfairneſs; being by obvious implication an encroachment upon private property, at the ſame time ſubjecting you to the imputation of a breach of confidence; public curioſity is in a great degree by that means foreſtalled, and if profit were the object, that object, ſo far as the influence of your inſtructive publication extends, muſt be ultimately defeated.

Two widely different opinions are ſtarted, reſpecting the matter in conteſt. To one of them only you have condeſcended to give publicity, while, contrary to the declared purpoſe of the Britiſh Regiſter, all notice of the other ſeems ſtudiouſly ſuppreſſed; yet ſurely if the ſubject itſelf was of ſufficient importance to merit ſuch diſtinction, the parties ſhould have at leaſt equal opportunity of ſpeaking for themſelves; or if partiality attached to either, in point of nationality as well as priority, the argument in favour of domeſtic pretenſions might have claimed the preference. The oppoſition, it ſhould ſeem, is a partnerſhip affair; but on an attentive review of the context, the natural conſtruction is, that the writer of the introductory Epiſtle, and the accompliſhed Maitre D'Hotel, the pretended author of the ſecond, are individually

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dividually but one and the ſame perſon; and notwithſtanding his continental exterior, *bona fide*, an Engliſhman, more concerned for the advancement of German literature, and the reputation of Bürger, than the honour of his own country. This, however unnatural, is a caſe by no means uncommon with the new-fangled refiners of the preſent age. I am, thank my ſtars, one of thoſe who are not aſhamed of their country, and would on all honeſt occaſions give my ſuffrage in her favour. I am, I truſt, a friend to humanity, an admirer of genius, and a well-wiſher to the propagation of letters; but I am alſo a lover of truth, and would not even for my country, far leſs to ſerve the purpoſes of a party, peeviſhly controvert facts, or arrogate diſtinctions, to which ſhe had not a legitimate claim. Theſe are my principles; I ſpeak as I think, and what I conceive right, I have no heſitation, on proper occaſions, to maintain. I think our continental accuſer wrong, and therefore oppoſe him: I think in too ſervilely adopting the whims and prodigalities of other countries, we are wrong, and therefore condemn it; but I am far from encouraging national reflections, and have aſſuredly no intention of giving perſonal offence. One capital diſqualification, I am ſenſible, and with too much reaſon I fear it is not the only one, I labour under: I was born among you. It is unfortunately a fact, verified by daily experience, that from ſome unaccountable predilection, peculiar to theſe iſlands, when a native and a foreigner enter the liſts, the current of prejudice runs, right or wrong, in favour of the latter. Through that channel I have no expectations: It is to the fairneſs of my deductions, and the equity of my cauſe, I look for an impartial deciſion. Such enquiries are not without their importance: conducted with temper and decorum they may contribute to inſtruction, diveſted of its formalities, and, at leaſt as well as a Novel or a Fairy Tale, ſerve to ameliorate the preſſure of ſeverer

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ſeverer occupations. The Writer can ſpeak from experience, and believes he is not ſingular; but of this in its place.

Your advocate in the caſe of Leonora, aware of ſome difficulties in his way, takes his ground with circumſpection; but proceeds not incontinently to the point. Like a ſkilful partizan, he makes his approaches at a diſtance, and ſkirmiſhes under cover of a maſked battery. The round-about method of marſhalling his forces; the irrelevant matter of the preamble; his apocryphal journey; the fineſſe of the adventure of the inn; his guarded predilection for a particular hypotheſis; and his impoſing ſimplicity of ſtyle, all ſpeciouſly calculated to miſlead, betray a ſuſpicion of his materials; and intimate a latent ſomething which he ſeems unwilling to avow. His viſible anxiety for the reputation and uncommon qualifications of "mine Hoſt of the Garter," aſtoniſhing to his readers, as partly he acknowleges they appeared to himſelf, is beſides an unfavourable ſymptom, which adds little to the credit of his relation, and operates untowardly for the intereſt of his cauſe.

His poſitions lead to a twofold object; to prove that the ſtory of Leonora or the Suffolk Miracle, is not of Engliſh growth; and to confine the merit of it to Bürger. 'Tis labour thrown away. Weigh the matter attentively; give to both ſides their acceſſories, and let impartiality hold the balance. To dwell upon his weakeſt arguments is unneceſſary, nor need we follow him ſtep by ſtep in the detail. It will be ſufficient to ſhew the futility of the ſtrong, if any can deſerve that epithet, where all are nearly of the ſame ſtamp, founded wholly upon hearſay, and report at ſecond-hand, without any authentic credentials, or written memorial of ancient date, to ſupport them. I appeal, my moſt learned adverſary! to facts, and without troubling myſelf unneceſſarily with adventitious pleas, out of thy own mouth will I condemn thee.

We

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We are given to underſtand, that upon a "more minute "enquiry, He," the intelligent poſtmaſter, as he is deſcribed,* "inſiſted upon the fable being of Saxon origin, and offered "to produce an old man," who by the way is not produced, "an inhabitant of the place, who would repeat nearly the "whole poem in Low Dutch; adding, that this man fre- "quently heard it recited in his youth, by people ſtill older "than himſelf, from whom he had learned it." On the ſame authority we are likewiſe previouſly given to underſtand, and it is ſubſequently inſiſted upon, that the whole poem is Bürger's; and Bürger is comparatively a young man. Here then, in the firſt inſtance, the gentleman entangles himſelf in a dilemma. Either he muſt give up the claim of Bürger's originality, or his informer's character for veracity and preciſion: of two evils to chooſe the leaſt, let us ſuppoſe it the latter; then what becomes of his argument? His premiſſes are unfounded, and, the conſequence is inevitable, his whole ſyſtem muſt fall to the ground.... Admitting the antiquity of the fable, and its antiquity I ſhould be loth to impeach, Bürger indiſputably has contributed to its reſtoration; he may have reviſed, corrected and improved; or as Dryden, Pope and others have Chaucer's Poems, he may have modernized it; that praiſe is decidedly his due; in that light, he is its Father, and Leonora his Child by adoption; but however dreſſed, it does not vitiate its deſcent; Leonora by whatever name or appellation deſignated, is ſtill the ſelf-ſame perſon, one and individual, undeniably the offspring of her original parent.

* Thoſe who furniſh poſthorſes, &c. for the accommodation of travellers, here with us, poor Iſlanders! are in familiar and vulgar acceptation, Innkeepers; on the grand tour, where every thing forſooth muſt be in ſtyle, however in fact inferior, they are in the more dignified phraſe dubbed Poſtmaſters.

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In this aukward predicament your travelling inquiſitor ſuſpends the proceedings, and after a convenient interval, of which, as we may well preſume, he took care to avail himſelf, with renovated powers, in character of advocate for Saxony, he returns to the charge, and armed cap-a-pee, ſmites our poor antiquarians from Dan to Beerſheba, for attempting to ſet the ſaddle on the right horſe. Flying rumour and hearſay is his forte. Neither am I deſtitute of proofs in that way, at leaſt equally cogent and authentic; and if dates be compared, of a ſtill more remote reach. My Father, who is near ſeventy, learned the ſtory from his Nurſe's Huſband, whoſe memory even now is reſpected in his village, a village or rather hamlet,* in Lancaſhire, near the flouriſhing town of Preſcot, where he was honourably interred at an advanced time

* Gillor's Green [Thill-Horſe Green?] .... where he enjoyed a ſmall patrimony, whence ſometime before his deceaſe he removed to a new houſe he had purchaſed, directly oppoſite the great window at the Eaſt end of St. Peter's Church, Liverpool. He was of the claſs of labouring men:

Let not ambition mock their uſeful toil,
Their homely joys, and deſtiny obſcure;
Nor grandeur hear with a diſdainful ſmile,
The ſhort and ſimple annals of the poor.

So ſings the penſive Gray, and his idea will not be hurt by a little funeral anecdote.... On the demiſe of the venerable old man a quantity of bread and good malt liquor was provided by his widow and ſole executrix, of which timely notice was given; and before the coffin was placed upon the hearſe, which conveyed his remains to Preſcot, his native parish, purſuant to a clauſe in his laſt will ſo ordering, every poor perſon that came forward, man, woman and child, without exception, received a twopenny loaf and a pint of ale. A like portion of bread and ale was diſtributed to the poor at Preſcot alſo; when, previous to his interment, the full ſervice for the dead was performed by the Rector, the Reverend Mr. Quin; and an excellent ſermon preached from Heb. ii. v. 22: *By faith Joſeph when he died, made mention of the departing of the Children of Iſrael; and gave commandment concerning his bones.*.... Such were the worthy beings among whom my Father received his early impreſſions!

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time of life, when my Father was a young boy. The good old man had it from a relative of his own, a clock-maker of the name of Eccleſton, who alſo was well ſtricken in years, and always gave it as a tale of former times. It was printed on a ſingle half ſheet, procured at a ſtall in Liverpool, and ſtitched up with the Seaman's Garland, the lamentable Hiſtory of Jane Shore, Tom Hickathrift, Jack the Giant-killer and others, for his winter's evenings' amuſement and improvement in reading. Such was the ſimplicity and taſte of that ancient contented neighbourhood! This, though I do not in general eſteem hearſay allegations as the moſt immaculate and deciſive, will doubtleſs carry its due weight in evidence of our ſtory's being of ancient notoriety in England, and at leaſt coeval with, if not prior to its rival of the Continent, which, if not identically the ſame, is manifeſtly of a kindred ſtock. But this, when corroborated by antique vouchers from the preſs, which cannot be rationally controverted or miſtaken, muſt, I ſhould imagine, obviate every cavil, and finally ſettle the diſpute.

This I know will ſcarcely ſatisfy your perſevering correſpondent. The gentleman in his travelling capacity, is curious in his reſearches, that is perfectly in character, and opportunely, it ſeems, he falls in with a perſon of conſummate intelligence, his communicative Hoſt, not leſs able than willing to gratify his inquiſitive gueſt, who as we have ſeen proves a ſtrenuous partizan. He got a hint, no matter how, of a formidable force in array againſt him, and aware of the inſufficiency of his outworks, has recourſe to new levies, clearly for the purpoſe of countermining the aſſailants. . . . Whoſe is the tale of Leonora? that is the queſtion. Common fame, according to him, decides it in favour of Saxony; but, ſetting aſide his militia of reporters, who are not wholly free from inconſiſtencies, the German Mercury (*der Deutſche Mercur.* Sect. 2d, &c.) is appealed to; but how does that mend the matter?

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matter? In oppoſition to records of immemorial exiſtence, a poſthumous publication, a chronicle of to day, a common newspaper, is preſſed into the ſervice; upon what principle of reaſoning, can ſuch an authority defeat the claims of primogeniture, or put down ſturdy objectors? Poſitive aſſertion, and the ſame rambling goſſip's creed, tricked out in modern print, is but a ſort of left-handed defence; a fond repetition of ſtill the ſame noſtrum exhibited in a more convenient vehicle. It furniſhes nothing new, nothing more to the purpoſe, nothing more to be relied on, conſequently nothing more convincing or concluſive. Our documents of eſtabliſhed antiquity he cannot abſolutely reſiſt, but their authority he is anxious to evade. "The Collection of old Ballads publiſhed "in London, and in which" as he parſimoniouſly admits," the matter of that Poem," meaning Leonora, "is contained." Obſerve! he does ſlightingly advert to; but he recognizes it with manifeſt conſtraint, and brings it, *coram nobis*, for the ſole purpoſe of depreciating its validity. In quoting the title of the Poem or Suffolk Miracle, as he ſlightingly gives it, the moſt ſtriking part, and that moſt material to the point at iſſue, is ſuppreſſed; I mean the incident of the horſe and his preternatural expedition. The omiſſion, we may preſume, was intentional, perhaps not, with as many other perhapſes as you pleaſe; for I have no pleaſure in taxing any gentleman with diſingenuouſneſs; nevertheleſs, in other reſpects, he is abundantly minute. He is needleſsly particular as to the number of volumes, and hypercritically preciſe in the chronology of their publication, which he refers to the year 1723. A conceſſion of ſome importance, which peradventure, unwittingly eſcaped him; Bürger was born in the year 1748. The inference is plain. My Father, whoſe object was truth, to afford every unprejudiced reader, a fair opportunity of judging for himſelf, has given the entire legend of the Suffolk Miracle, verbatim, from the collection, this moment before me, as it ſtands; and whoever compares that

and

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and Leonora together, needs no ſpectacles to perceive a coincidence of circumſtances, and a reſemblance too cloſe, to admit, without difficulty, the perſuaſion of its being purely accidental.

But be not ſurpriſed, gentle Reader! if by the way thou art informed of a fact as yet unhinted at, probably unſuſpected. Much has been ſaid of a Collection of old Ballads, in three volumes, printed Anno 1723. Our Critics, who cannot keep counſel, were they true adepts in ancient lore, belike would have told us, no collection of that deſcription in the archives of literature is diſcoverable; nevertheleſs, the inference as to Bürger is tenable and fair. There is a ſmall typographical error in the date ſo aſſigned, it may be of the preſs, or poſſibly owing to one of two incidental cauſes, unneceſſary to particularize: Be that as it may, it is of little conſequence, the error is eaſily rectified; for 1723 read 1727. This is the edition cited by Dr. Percy in his Reliques of Ancient Engliſh Poetry, particularly in the ſhort hiſtorical illuſtration prefixed to the Dragon of Wantley, where he acknowleges his obligations for ſome pertinent obſervations on that ſubject, and makes honourable mention of the former editor. Both have enriched their collections with curious prolegomena, at the head of the ſeveral ballads reſpectively adopted, and from this conformity of plan it is not improbable, the Reverend Dr. took the hint from his predeceſſor. The collection more particularly referred to, appears to have been the firſt of the kind, and the edition more immediately in contemplation, is expreſsly the third; another circumſtance which your elaborate inveſtigator has adroitly ſlurred over, willing, as at firſt view it might appear, to confine the knowlege of that miraculous tale in England to the æra aſſigned. That there was no ſuch collection in three volumes ever publiſhed, antecedent to the edition of 1727 may be ſafely aſſerted; it is evident, from the book itſelf. The two preceding editions extended no farther than

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to a single volume each; even the edition of 1727, which is the third, and now in my hand, is not announced in the title page as one of a set; but was sent into the world, as a single volume also, though in the preface, which is pleasantly and sensibly written, we are led speedily to expect a continuation. Now allowing time for the sale of the two former impressions, which, being adorned with suitable engravings and for those days rather expensive, could hardly have been very rapid, we may reasonably fix the period of the first appearance of these legendary tales in that form, about the beginning of the century. How long before this contested phenomenon had been in circulation in a halfpenny ballad; how long before it had been handed about in manuscript; how long before the story might have passed from father to son by oral tradition; or how long before it might have been in requisition in the nursery

——————— When finally by night
The village matron, round the blazing hearth,
Suspends the infant audience with her tales,
Breathing astonishment: . . . .

How long, I say, the Suffolk Miracle in one shape or other, might have been the theme of our rude admiring ancestors, I am not blessed with your correspondent's intuitive power over climates, epochs and æras to determine. Let me, however, not detract from his merit. His exertions in the cause, however unimportant, prove his patriotic feelings, supposing him really Saxon, and might fairly put my good friend John Bull to the blush. He leaves no stone unturned to do honour to his *natale solum*, and attach the laurel to his countryman; laudable so far is his intention; in which, if he fails, it affords a fine opportunity of deriding our folly in so unaccountably sacrificing at the shrine of vanity, and lavishing distinctions on exotic adventurers to the prejudice of domestic worth,

and

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and diſcouragement of native talents. An Engliſh edition, ſplendid beyond compare, is publiſhed of his countryman's Poem, a ſingle ballad, fought after and bought up with avidity at an enormous price;* enormous we may ſurely call it, when three of the printed copies bring more in the ſhops, than was paid for the manuſcript of Milton's Paradiſe Loſt, which for a length of years, conſigned to duſty oblivion, lay mouldering on the ſhelves uncalled for and unnoticed. But this your worthy poſtmaſter makes a piſh at, and the compliment to his countryman is loſt in the irritation he feels, at our attempting to claim the privilege of thinking, and what is ſimply and equitably our right. Such is foreign gratitude! ſuch the reward of Britiſh genius!! and ſuch the conſiderations deemed trivial and unimportant!!!... The pre-eminence of foreign genius, uſhered forth with ſignal diſtinctions, was laviſhly aſſerted; the modeſt claim of our Suffolk Minſtrel was brought forward, but not with inſult or illiberality; and however by ſecond ſight, or otherwiſe, your ingenious correſpondent got intimation of it, was by him and his abettors unceremoniouſly diſputed. His arguments were incontinently eſpouſed, and favoured with extenſive circulation among us; but cold water thrown upon thoſe for domeſtic deſert. Is what was thought of ſuch importance when a Foreigner was in queſtion, then only matter of indifference, when a ſtigma is attached to our Country, and a Native in the caſe? Call you this backing your Friends, my Countrymen? I do not wiſh to raviſh one ſprig of bays from the temples of Bürger; on the contrary, I reſpect his talents, and willingly ſubſcribe to his deſerts; "that the ſtory has gained conſiderably under his "hand is not denied;" but I contend, that for its reception, and the high eſtimation it has acquired in England, much is alſo

* Four Guineas I have heard asked in Dublin for a ſingle copy, and four Guineas I believe was the price uſually paid.

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alſo due to his tranſlators, who, in their turn, have pruned away his excreſcencies, ſoftened down his aſperities, and exhibited him ſo much to advantage in their verſions. A poſition which I foreſee may be ungracious to ſome, and require ſomething more than a bare *ipſe dixit* to make good.

The German is not yet a language generally in vogue, of courſe competent judges of Bürger in his native uniform, are not extremely numerous among us; yet judges, more or leſs, we have among us, and to help out the quorum, we may call upon the tranſlators, a deſcription of writers, who, if not enthuſiaſtically partial to their archetypes, are, for obvious reaſons, not wont to under-rate them; or damp the ardour of curioſity, by depreciating works, which muſt neceſſarily have coſt them time and pains in preparing for general reception. The Laureat, who, for the gratification of his countrymen, has rendered Leonora into the vernacular tongue, modeſtly ſpeaking of the taſk he has ſo laudably performed, thus admoniſhes his readers: .... "This is a tranſlation "line by line, and as near the original, as the reſtraint of "verſification and the idiom and genius of the different lan-"guages would admit; a cloſer verſion would in ſome places "have been ridiculous, and in others profane." .... Again: "This little Poem, from the ſingularity of the incidents, and "the wild horror of the images, is certainly an object of "curioſity; but is by no means held up as a pattern for imi-"tation." By the way, the claim of merit, whatever it may be, for ſingularity of incident and wild horror of imagery was anticipated by our Suffolk Minſtrel, but could not be perceived, it ſeems, till ſeen through a foreign medium.... Mr. Spence whoſe fervid youth, aiding and happily aided by the ſiſter art, indulges greater freedom and a bolder touch; and Mr. Stanley, who with a Critic's ſkill and Poet's fire, improves the canvas, and gives it an effect peculiarly his own, upon the whole

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whole concur in ſentiment with the Laureat. It was ſaid of Pope's Iliad, and not unworthily was it ſaid:

That future ages ſhall with wonder ſeek
Who 'twas tranſlated Homer into Greek.

Without going into the queſtion of comparative excellence, at which the bigots to antiquity would ſhake their heads, it muſt be acknowleged, the author of the couplet, in a few words, gives us an advantageous idea of Engliſh genius, and for the purpoſe there can be no harm in taking the compliment literally; no diſparagement then to your paragon of Saxony, or offence to her ſanguine admirers, I would ſay to the Engliſh Leonora, take which verſion you will:

——————— *mutato nomine de te*
Fabula naratur. . . . .

Whether this be, or be not, a caſe pertinently adduced, or *cæteris paribus*, appoſite to the point, is ſubmitted to the judges; but let him not boaſt of his impartiality who conſtrues it a reflection on Bürger.

Our foreignized competitors, I am aware, will give no credit for this. All or none is their motto. They will rather compromiſe the claims of Bürger's originality, and ſacrifice the cauſe of their juſtly-admired Favourite, than yield a ſingle jot of it to their rivals. Will do it, did I ſay? they have done it; I have proved it; the letter proves itſelf. Waving the pretenſions of Bürger, freſh ground is broken; England or Saxony, that is now the queſtion. The conteſt becomes national, and at all events, to wreſt the ſtory from the Britons, and for ever to annihilate their ſaucy pretenſions, your champion of the North is at no loſs. In a ſingle line he gives them the coup de grace; with a ſtroke of his pen he damns

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them ... no ancient memorial or written monument has he in his power to confront them; in the lapſe of ages ink is diſcharged; parchment periſhes, and ſtone and mortar crumbles into duſt. He goes roundly to work. Conjecture, pure conjecture is his dernier reſort, and in that he is veritably without parallel. Thirteen hundred years to him are but as yeſterday. With the ſpeed of Pacolet's flying horſe, or ghoſtly William's ghoſtly Charger, whip, ſpur and away, he hurries us back to the predatory times of Hengiſt and Horſa. ... There his hopes reſt at the fated goal. There he fixes the period of this wonderful ſtory's importation into Britain. ... We have been led a woundy dance, Sirs! Let us breathe.

Muſt we then tamely acquieſce, and with tacit ſubmiſſion, authorize the deluſion? If ſo, what ſimilar depredations may not in future be attempted. Adieu then to Robin Hood, Sherwood Foreſt may be found in the purlieus of Glandorf, and Birnham wood be brought to Dunſinane. Chevy-chace we muſt relinquiſh, and the Babes in the Wood muſt again be abandoned, unfortunately contained in the ſame volume with the Suffolk Miracle. .... Well-a-day! what a doleful cataſtrophe muſt enſue! What a ſad revolution among the feathered choirs! Poor Robin-red-breaſts, the pathetic incident of your covering the deſerted innocents painfully with leaves will no more be remembered; ſtripped of your ancient palladium, your little lives, wont to be held ſacred in Britain, will be expoſed; you will be treated as vulgar birds; your curious neſts of moſs will be rifled. In the bleak froſty glooms of December no more ſhall ye place confidence in man; enter fearleſs the rural cot, and hopping beneath the ruſtic board, pick up the crumbs there in ſafety; every prowling urchin will perſecute you, and the epicure, refining upon gluttony, will twiſt your gloſſy necks, and have you ſpitted for the table. .... For pity's ſake ſuſpend the tale of woe; it muſt not, ſhall not be; reſt, gentle birds! ſecure; no lurking foe awaits

awaits you. This all is ſuppoſition, chimerical and groundleſs, and almoſt as far-fetched as his of Saxony, who in his zeal for the antiquity of the ſtory of the Suffolk Miracle, alias the Dutch Ballad, alias Leonora, tells us, " perhaps it is ſo old that the Saxons carried it over to England," meaning as has been obſerved at the invaſion of Hengiſt and Horſa. A bold aſſertion to be ſure, and aſſertion, qualified with a perhaps, is all we have for it. We want proof more relative than this. . . . . Well! conjectures coſt nothing, and guarded with a perhaps, are as free to us as to the Poſtmaſter, and for any thing that has as yet appeared, it may be Engliſh or Welſh, or perhaps Iriſh as well as Saxon.

The bards of Great Britain were a numerous and highly favoured tribe, who wanted neither invention to frame, nor ſkill to adapt to their harps, a tale ſo well ſuited to the temper and taſte of the chivalrous times of King Arthur; and none better calculated in its turn, for the entertainment of his illuſtrious court, and his gallant knights of the round table. It was a ſubject that could not fail of being popular; thus the Saxon invaders, who frequently muſt have heard it from the itinerant minſtrels of thoſe days, picked it up and carried it back with them to their own country; and a pretty tale it was for the fugitives to cover the diſgrace of their defeats, and conciliate the good will of their Deſdemonas in their foreſts at home, who little ſcrupulous would indulge female curioſity, " and with a greedy ear devour up their diſcourſe." That it could not poſſibly originate with them is proved from internal evidence. We perceive in it traces of local manners and cuſtoms, with a variety of other particulars eſſential to the fable, without which it could not have exiſted, and therefore muſt have been in its primary concoction, a conſtituent part. The peculiar ſtyle of the machinery, the preternatural incidents and ſcope of the plot altogether, furniſh demonſtration incontrovertible. The Saxons of thoſe times and long after, were,

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were, to a man, Pagans, and could have no conception of a ſubject, that ſmells ſo powerfully of the cloiſter. They burned their dead, and could have no idea of ſpirits "doomed for a certain time to walk the night." The votaries of Woden, Thor and Freia had no churches and church-yards for cemeteries; and the buſineſs of their undertakers, if of that vocation any they had, was to collect faggots, not to provide coffins or winding-ſheets, nor have I heard they uſed either palls, ſcarfs or hatbands. The place of Sexton, like many ſnug places among ourſelves, muſt have been a mere ſinecure; bells were unknown in the wilds of Saxony; even rappers, that grievous tax on the indolence and eaſe of High Life below Stairs, was a ſubſequent contrivance; the ſounding horn announced the coming gueſt; yet all, ſave one, are mentioned or neceſſarily implied in the progreſs of the ſtory. Arthur and his Britons were Chriſtians, and ſimplicity, enthuſiaſm and credulity, the popular characteriſtics. Every circumſtance of this miraculous legend, impreſſed with congenial features, marks the offspring of ſuperſtition and monkiſh impoſture; and if authority were wanting, that of Jeffrey of Monmouth, I preſume, would be rejected; but Gildas, ſome five or ſix hundred years, a religious of elder repute, in his account of Miracles, has recorded not a few, upon which that of Suffolk might eaſily enough be grafted. Hence, admitting its poſitive antiquity as preſumed by the ingenious Hoſt, a preſumption which may perhaps be erroneous, and on which I by no means inſiſt, it could not be of Saxon, but clearly of Britiſh extraction. That the Suffolk Miracle, and the Saxon Leonora, notwithſtanding ſome modern touches, have many traits in common he partially allows; but in throwing it ſo far back, however inconſiſtently, if we can gueſs at his meaning, he would transfer the charge of plagiariſm, and inſinuate that the Suffolk Minſtrel was rather indebted to Bürger than Bürger in any wiſe obligated to our Suffolk Minſtrel.

Having

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Having thus far accompliſhed his deſultory taſk, the learned Hoſt or Poſtmaſter as the text has it, in the fulneſs of ſelf-complacency, contemplating his imaginary triumph, thus to a trial of ſkill in the perſon of his inquiſitive gueſt, challenges the troop of ſceptical readers. "The explanation of the reſemblance of our tale," as he will needs have it, "to the Suffolk Miracle I muſt leave to you." .... This my Father has ſome time ago done to his hand, as clearly ſtated in his Obſervations already referred to, which, as alſo before hinted, the gentleman ſomehow, or I am ſtrangely miſtaken, previouſly got a peep at, and aided by an odd concurrence of circumſtances, has been at conſiderable pains to defeat. His own opinion of the matter in the ſweeping clauſe, I have juſt been conſidering, upon his own principles, by a parity of reaſoning in his own way, I think I have fairly confuted. A few things ſtill remain, but ere we proceed to boult this matter to the bran, ſome apology. .... Stay, ſtay, ſomewhat peeviſhly interrupts Mr. Dapperwit, this is too long; ſo on another occaſion, ſays old Polonius in the Play, and apropos, the ſame anſwer may ſerve both; but ſeriouſly, to make the moſt of your hint, Signor Dapperwit, enough, perhaps too much has been ſaid on a ſubject which after all muſt remain for ever problematical. Enough and too much indeed, with a faſtidious ſhrug, rejoins your modern Stagyrite, it puts one in mind of a good thing formerly ſaid on the diſputes about two rival cat-gut ſcrapers:

> Strange all this difference ſhould be,
> 'Twixt tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee!

Yea, verily, and it might put thee in mind too of poor Chatterton, againſt whom, ill-fated youth! the doughty corps of wits roſe up in fell array, and badgered to the death!

Did

Did he want merit? No,* he wanted bread; and in addition to the crime of poverty, he was an Engliſhman, and the harmleſs plagiariſt of a name. Bürger, a foreigner, perſonally or through the indiſcreet zeal of his admirers, we ſtill, under

* We are ſupported on this queſtion, take it in the rough: .. "Johnſon ſaid of Chatterton: this is the moſt extraordinary young man that has encountered my knowledge. It is wonderful how the whelp has written ſuch things!" Boſwell's Johnſon, 2d edit. vol. 2, p. 412. Senſible how poor a figure virtue makes when laquied by pale poverty, and to his misfortune, as in the event it proved, ſenſible of the influence of a name, as a forlorn hope, this friendleſs youth ſacrificed at the ſhrine of Apollo, under the appellation of one Rowley, a Monk, of another century; who, whatever it might contribute to the honour of his memory, could ſuffer no injury from the aſſumption. Yet ſurely the action, conſtrue it as you may, was not without precedent. Are not all who ſhelter themſelves under feigned ſignatures, a practice notoriouſly common; all who publiſh narratives founded on facts, that never had exiſtence but in the writer's imagination; all who exhibit as tranſlations, compoſitions in no other language extant; all who produce epiſtolary correſpondences from the cloſets of celebrated characters never concealed but in the archives of their own perieraniums; all who preſent tours that were never made but in their own apartments; all who write letters to themſelves in the name of others, and indulge the public with their anſwers, for ſpecial purpoſes which it might not be over-modeſt or convenient to avow; in effect, is not every anonymous writer, paragraphiſt, eſſayiſt, pamphleteer, or bookmaker, allowing all their merit, availing himſelf of a maſk, and perhaps with leſs excuſable incitements on a footing in that reſpect with Chatterton? Yet they in peace enjoy the plenteous harveſt of their labours; and he, as the vileſt criminal is, ſubjected to mereileſs perſecution. It is freſh within the memory of many now living, that one of thoſe celebrated muſicians mentioned in the text, would in common for his morning's whet, ſwallow more than would have regaled that deſerted young genius for a week, and would do alderman-like juſtice to a Lord Mayor's feaſt an hour after. Chatterton, with the ſlender pittance he could procure by his pen, enjoyed one only luxury, the luxury of now and then contributing his mite to the relief of a deſtitute mother and his ſiſter, but even of that melancholy gratification unremitting cruelty ſpeedily deprived them. In the fulfilment of the pious duty, ſinking under the gripe of oppreſſion, to ſatisfy the cravings of hunger, at the age of eighteen he had recourſe to the bottle. Merciful God! 'twas ariſenic!

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under correction, are diſpoſed to think, appropriator of the honours of an entire poem; widely different too was the caſe with your reputed catgut ſcrapers; who can be ſtrangers to the name and merit of Handel and Bononcini? they too were foreigners, who enjoyed their conſequence and fared ſumptuouſly every day: yet, candidly to ſpeak, the ſarcaſm however miſapplied has a ſeaſoning of wit; but witticiſm is not orthodoxy; nor the dogma of an individual the go-cart for a world. The ſatirical genius to whom that epigrammatic ſally is in general, though erroneouſly attributed,* was of ſo ſingular a temperament touching that delightful art, that he has been known to declare, the ſcraping of a cutler's grind-ſtone, or the hideous din of a pair of intriguing caterwaulers ſqualling their midnight duets was to his ears as agreeable as the fineſt concerto on the organ executed by the finger of Handel, in which predicament, Sir Critic! perhaps thou ſtandeſt in regard to the ſubjects of preſent enquiry; but are you all, my Countrymen! thus ſtoically conſtituted? Prejudice apart, are not

* The elegant tranſlator of Pliny, in a very claſſical Collection of Original Letters under the aſſumed appellation of Sir Thomas Fitzosborne. . . . : Alas, poor Chatterton! what greater was thy fault? . . . attributes this little Jue d'Eſprit to Swift, and gives the two lines here cited, as the whole of it, upon which he founds a delicate ironical diſquiſition on the abuſe of Verbal Criticiſm: (letter 63) but that ingenious gentleman is miſtaken as to the author. The Dean of St. Patrick's, though much in his manner, had no title to it whatever. The original is in ſix lines, and was written by Mr. Byrom of Mancheſter; the curious Reader will find it in a Collection of his Poems well worth the peruſal; it runs as follows:

EPIGRAM ON THE FEUDS BETWEEN THE ADMIRERS OF HANDEL AND BONONCINI.

Some ſay, compared to Bononcini,
That Mynheer Handel's but a ninny;
Others aver, that he to Handel,
Is ſcarcely fit to hold a candle:
Strange all this difference ſhould be
'Twixt tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee!

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not ninety-nine out of a hundred of the elaborate diſcuſſions hourly obtruded from the preſs, every whit as unimportant, ſave to the paper-trade, and of as trifling a nature on the ſcale of amuſement, as the burthen of an old ſong? Addiſon, who bore no contemptible ſway in the republic of letters, and is allowed withal to have had pretty tolerable notions of the *utile dulce*, affords ſome pertinent inſtances of his predilection for ancient ballads. Who will ſay that his comments on Chevy-chace, and eke of the Children in the Wood, are not proofs of a better taſte and a more innocent way of amuſing himſelf, as well as his readers, than if the time had been laviſhed in treading the dark mazes of nefarious politics; diſſeminating ſcandal, or propagating falſe doctrines, hereſy and ſchiſm? the faſhionable occupation, the opprobrium and the bane of this our *enlightened* and *philoſophiſing* age! Dr. Johnſon does not condemn the conduct of the Author of the Spectators, and the ſame venerated Cenſor, who was never an advocate for trifling, in expreſs terms, ſanctions the tenour of our preſent lucubrations. Theſe are his words: "What is borrowed is not to be enjoyed as our own; and "it is the buſineſs of critical juſtice to give every bird of the "Muſes his proper feather." Why then to our ſtory, and "if I were as tedious as a king I could find in my heart to "beſtow it all on your worſhip."

Our opponent throws down the gauntlet, and marſhals me the way that I ſhould go. Like the flame of an expiring taper, after burning to the ſnuff, with intermitting gleams, ſtill hovering o'er the ſocket, he hankers after Bürger; at intervals he quits him, at intervals returns; quits, returns again and quits; once more! he barely twinkles; this effort is his laſt. Alas! poor Ghoſt, go on I'll follow thee.... "For my part," ſo voucheth the learned Hoſt, ſtill hankering after Bürger, "I am fully ſatisfied" who doubts it; but are your readers ſatisfied? "that Bürger did not take his Poem from "any

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"any Engliſh Ballad, but from an old low Dutch Tale; "the more ſo as Mr. Schlegel aſſures us, that Bürger in "the ſtudy of the old Engliſh Ballads, confined himſelf al- "moſt excluſively to Percy's Reliques of Ancient Poetry." Is not this on one ſide half giving up the queſtion and begging it on the other? Begging is no crime, and ſeeing it is the faſhion, let us follow the example, and as the ſong ſays, 'a begging we will go.' "Confined himſelf almoſt excluſively to Percy's Reliques," was the phraſe, and a ſaving phraſe it is; yet, tho' a general rule, like other general rules, it plainly admits of exceptions. Would not a man fond of reading, if occaſion offered, be tempted to tranſgreſs it? I am ſure I ſhould, and ſo, or I miſtake my man, would Bürger; a ſingle treſpaſs would ſufficiently anſwer the end; and ſurely it is more than probable the temptation was not wanting. Would not the ſame curioſity that led him to enquire for Percy's Reliques, wherein our collection is ſo honourably noticed, in all likelihood excite a deſire to peruſe others of a like kind, for which there is no good reaſon to ſuppoſe he had far to ſeek? The book in queſtion, antecedent to Percy's, had gone through three editions, we may ſuppoſe numerous ones, and then was in circulation. It was known even in the remoteſt quarters of Ireland: '*Et penitus toto diviſos orbe Hibernos.*' The copy I have was purchaſed in the town of Cavan by an Iriſh Divine *, and was not the only one, nor confined to a corner. There ſubſiſts an affinity of old between the inhabitants of the two countries, I mean Saxony and Eng-

F f land,

* The Rev. John Jermyn:—his great-grand-daughter, the wife of John Parry, bookſeller, Angleſea-ſtreet, had the book from her mother, who, as well as her father Mr. James Shore, a reſpectable citizen of Dublin, remembers the Suffolk Miracle, handed down from her reverend grandſire as a popular old ſtory about the vicinage, in his childhood: the good couple full of years are ſtill living. The volume alluded to, containing this, together with a number of other rare pieces, ſold originally new for about three ſhillings. I ſaw within theſe few days a copy of Leonora alone, in no very extraordinary binding, rated at 13l. 13s. ! !

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land, and that renovated, ſtrengthened and cemented by the addition of royal ties. This would naturally create in the minds of the Saxon Literati a predilection for our hiſtory. Ballads are the brief chronicles of the times, and it is evident, ſuch chronicles are in requeſt among them, and our language an object of purſuit; how elſe came Percy to be ſo well known and underſtood on that ſide the ocean? The ſame cauſes that operated in favour of our right-reverend literary antiquarian, would likewiſe operate in favour of others in the ſame line, and by what means ſoever his collection obtained a footing there, upon the ſame principle, by fair deduction, we may conclude to a certainty, his predeceſſor's, which is chiefly of the hiſtorical claſs, was the harbinger; procured the paſſport, and ultimately pointed out the way. Theſe matters duly taken into conſideration, your ingenious Hoſt might have ſpared his exultations; his riddle needs no Oedipus; but it leads to a uſeful caution, and involves a difficulty, for which poſſibly he may not be prepared. Beware of miſtaken zeal! no enemy does more miſchief than an indiſcreet friend. Admitting the exiſtence of that ſame Dutch Ballad, on which ſuch ſtreſs is laid, and knew they any other for their purpoſe it would not have been put under a buſhel *, it is yet to be proved, that that ſame Dutch Ballad itſelf is not a plagiariſm; borrowed, and ſomewhat diſguiſed, perhaps to conceal the fact, from the Engliſh; conſequently on our opponent's own principles, Leonora a copy at ſecond hand; in other words an imitation of an imitation; which, without forcing the premiſes, affords a ſecond, and by no means an improbable ſolution of the reſemblance of the German Leonora to *Our original* Suffolk Miracle. . . . FIAT JUSTICIA.

I might here amuſe my readers with a comparative analyſis of the Suffolk Miracle, and the Poem of Leonora; diſcriminate the features of reſemblance, and ſhow how and in what particulars, the one is an improvement on the other. I might purſue the ſame courſe with our different tranſlations of Leonora, four of which are in poſſeſſion of the

* Under a buſhel . . . *Our Engliſh Critics*, vid. Poſtſc. p. 215.

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the Public, and comparing them with each other, and with the original, point out their several beauties, and not derogating from the merits of Bürger, shew wherein his translators have the pre-eminence—But, to borrow a phrase of classical extraction : . . .

Gentlemen! I have done. E.-A. W.

P. S. Our English Critics, somehow hurt as it should seem at our developement of this poetical mystery, have endeavoured to help out the foreign writer by a reference to Southey [v. p. 189.] *We have read the extract referred to, but honestly confess we do not clearly perceive the "obvious resemblance" between a withered, superannuated Beldam, roused out of her Grave by her quondam coadjuter the Devil*, and a virtuous young Spinster, in a moment of ecstacy, submitting to a voluntary elopement with her spouse aparent. Our Suffolk Miracle is not merely resemblance; it is Identity. If what Matthew of Westminster relates be in reality to the purpose, so far is it from militating against our argument, it is manifestly in its favour. Matthew of Westminster takes precedence of Olaus Magnus and the Nuremberg Chronicle. The æra of his tale he has not left involved in affected obscurity, or sheltered under an ambiguous perhaps. The time of action, if action it may be called, is expressly stated, and, literally from the text, the extract bears date A. D. 852 †. The Author is confessedly of Westminster, and Westminster is in England; the scene lies in Berkeley, and Berkeley is in England; some remote indications*

* . . . "Insuite me defunctam in corio cervino, ac deinde in sarcophago lapideo supponite." . . . Factumque est ut præceperat illis, etc. . . . Dæmon ergo gestu videbatur arroganti ad Sepulchrum accedens, et nomen mulieris modicum ingeminans, surgere imperavit, etc.

† A. D. 852. Circa dies istos. Mulier quædam malefica, in villâ quas Berkeleia dicitur degens, gulæ amatrix ac petulantiæ, flagitiis modum usque in senium et augurjis non ponens, usque ad mortem impudica permansit, etc.

Vide Extr. Mat. West. Southey's Poems, vol. 2, p. 141.

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tions of local manners and cuſtoms are moreover diſcernible, and theſe too are characteriſtic of the priſtine manners and cuſtoms in England: Ergo; *It is, upon record, of immemorial antiquity, an Engliſh Story; which, as I take it, perfectly coincides with our idea of the Suffolk Miracle. Finally, in regard to the ſaid Matthew of Weſtminſter's tale, admitting for the ſake of argument, its "obvious reſemblance to the Story of* Lenoré," *as by our foreign Author's Critical Friends is ſuggeſted, in every conceivable point of relation to the matters in queſtion, it affords ſupplementary and corroborating proof of* Lenoré's *Engliſh Extraction. On the other hand, ſuppoſing our Engliſh Minſtrel to have modeled his Piece from the relation of his countryman Matthew of Weſtminſter, which is much to be doubted, conſidering how eſſentially in almoſt every point they differ, it muſt have appeared in the ſhape of the Suffolk Miracle a century at leaſt before the celebrated writer of* Lenoré *could hold a pen, or even the Minneſinger who perhaps uſed the incident that contributed its ſparkles in the Low-Dutch Ballad, to which, if it bears not an obvious reſemblance, it might prove on examination as nearly akin. Robert Southey, a favourite Engliſh Poet of the preſent day, has of late revived the Tale of the odious old Harridan, and the Extract to be found in the 2d vol. of his Poems was, we may lawfully preſume, to oblige the foreign Author* [*of Saxony*] *eſpecially referred to, conjointly with Olaus Magnus and the Nuremberg Chronicle; but the Suffolk Miracle, to which, not only in the cataſtrophe but in the moſt material incidents and purport of the Fable throughout, the tale of* Lenoré *bears a decided and ſtill more obvious and ſtriking reſemblance, tho' furniſhed ready to their hand, is wholly overlooked, and conſigned to oblivion; yet in what reſpect the reference tends to ſtrengthen or throw light on the foreign Author's argument is not quite ſo obvious as Mr. Cordes and his Friends may imagine. We beg leave, in our turn, to refer to Olaus Magnus, their own Hiſtorian, in whoſe works, printed at Antwerp, it is true the Tale alſo occurs; cited almoſt verbatim as we find it related by his Preçurſor in the wonderful, Matthew of Weſtminſter: But it is not becauſe it incidentally occurs in the multifarious*

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pages of a Northern Hiſtoriographer that it is therefore originally a Northern Story, as by fair implication they would have it underſtood. Matthew of Weſtminſter, a learned Benedictine Monk, Hiſtorian and Chronologer in the 14th century, died A. D. 1380. *Olaus Magnus, the good Archbiſhop of Upſal, Primate of Sweden and Gothland, about the middle of the 16th century, a native alſo of that country, takes up the Story and expreſsly declares it, "* Angliæ," *of England; The far-famed Staple of Romance. The work of our learned Benedictine firſt printed in London, was republiſhed ſome time after at Frankfort. This goes to prove, even to demonſtration, that the Northern Bards, or Scalds as they are called, for Inſtruction in Britiſh Lore were not truſting to "* Percy's Reliques." *From inconteſtible authority, their own national archives, (not forgetting the Nuremberg Chronicle) open to the inſpection of the curious, we learn, our old Britiſh Chronicles, fraught with the Legendary Tales of other Times, were a plenteous ſource of recondite Erudition and Winter Evenings' Amuſement upon the Continent, throughout Germany, and the Scandinavian Regions even to utmoſt Thulé. We cannot therefore ſubſcribe to Mr. Cordes' extravagant Hypotheſis, uſhered in with a* perhaps, *for the explanation of the Reſemblance of the German* Lenoré *and our Suffolk Miracle. "The Tale perhaps is"* not *"ſo old as that the Saxons carried it over to England," but on the contrary, an old Story indiſputably, a very popular old Story carried, however circuitouſly, from England into Saxony; a poſition irrefragably founded, as above ſhewn, on the ſettled uſage of their moſt admired Annaliſts. Thus, if other proofs were wanting, the Reſemblance, or rather Identity of Bürger's Tale and the Suffolk Miracle, ſo decidedly its Predeceſſor, is in direct oppoſition to the forced aſſumption of Mr. J. Francis Cordes, naturally, clearly and ſatisfactorily accounted for. Whatever Changes or Modifications it may have undergone it is a genuine Engliſh Story, concluſively the Archetype of the German* Lenoré, *and in its original native, plain and ſimple Dreſs entitled to a place among "*The Tales of Wonder." *'Tis wonderful the Compiler of that extraordinary Collection left it out!*

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* *NE videantur ſeptentrionales maleficæ ſolum hic ad triſtia ſpectacula adduci, occurrit Vincen. in Spe. Hiſt. lib. 25, cap. 26, aſſerens* Anglicanam *fœminam arte magica illuſam, a Dæmonibus poſt dira tormenta, ad aera cum clamoribus horrendis fuiſſe rapta. Cujus verba hæc ſunt. Mulier quædam apud Berkelriam* Angliæ *villam auguratrix et malefica, cum quadam die convivaretur, cornicula quam habebat in deliciis, vocalius ſolito neſcio quid cornicata eſt. Quo audito, cultellus Dominæ de manu excidit, ſimul et vultus expalluit. Et ingemiſcens diutiſſime ait; Hodie ad ultimum ſulcum pervenit aratrum meum: hodie audiam et accipiam grande incommodum. Adhuc ea loquente, venit ad eam nuncius dicens: Hodie mortuus eſt filius tuus, et tota familia ſubita morte interiit. Quo audito, continuo dolore ſaucia decubuit: vocarique præcepit ſurperſtites liberos, monachum et monacham, quibus ſingultiendo ait: Ego miſerabili quodam fato meo, dæmonicis actibus ſemper inſervivi: Ego vitiorum omnium ſentina et illecebrarum magiſtra fui et ſuperabam tantum in Religione veſtra et a meipſa deſperavi. Nunc ergo, quia ſcio me dæmones habituram exactores in pœnâ, quos habui ſuaſores in culpa, rogo vos per materna viſcera, ut mea tentetis alleviare tormenta: nam de Anima ſententiam damnationis non revocabitis. Corpus ergo meum inſuite in corio cervino et includite in lapideo ſarcophago et operculum ferro et plumbo conſtringite et Lapidem ipſum tribus magnis catenis circundate. Si tribus noctibus ita ſecure jacuero, quarta die infodietis me in humo: quanquam verear ne terra nolit me recipere pro maleficiis meis. Pſalmicines quinqua-*

* This Extract, for obvious reaſons, is taken verbatim from Olaus Magnus, and compared with Vincentius Burgundius, an eminent Theologian, Hiſtorian, and Philoſopher, whoſe authority is quoted. Theſe works are extremely ſcarce and not eaſy of acceſs. Southey's volume, a recent publication, containing the ſame ſtory in the words of Matthew of Weſtminſter, may without difficulty be conſulted; but tho' we are given to underſtand it is alſo related in the Nuremberg Chronicle, the who'e of what is there ſaid is comprized in four lines. Matthew of Weſtminſter, remarkable for

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LEST the Northern Witches ſhould ſeem to be quoted here only as having been made ſad examples of, there occurs in Vincentius's Hiſtory, book 25, cap. 26, a ſtory of an *Engliſh* woman, who having been baffled by the magic art, was carried into the air with horrid ſhouts by the Dæmons, after ſhe had endured ſevere torments. The words run thus: When a certain woman living at Berkeley, a ſmall village in *England*, a Fortune-teller and a Sorcereſs, was one day ſitting at dinner, a little crow, which ſhe was feeding for a delicate morſel, began to chatter ſomething, I know not what, in a more vocal ſtrain than uſual. Upon hearing which, the knife fell from the hand of the woman, and at the ſame time her countenance became pale; and heaving forth a heavy ſigh, after a long time ſhe exclaims, To day has my plough reached its utmoſt furrow; to day I ſhall hear and receive ſome terrible misfortune. While ſhe was ſpeaking theſe words, a meſſenger came to her ſaying, To day your ſon died, and his entire family periſhed by a ſudden death. Upon hearing which, the old woman being ſeized with immediate grief fell down, and ſhe commanded her ſurviving children to be called before her, a monk and a nun, whom ſhe thus addreſſes in a faltering voice: I have been the ſource of all vices and the miſtreſs of all ſeductions, and I had hopes of ſafety only in your Religion, deſpairing of every thing from myſelf. Now therefore, ſince I know full well that thoſe very Dæmons, who perſuaded me to commit every atrocious wickedneſs, will be my executioners, I beſeech you by theſe maternal breaſts, that you will make an attempt to allay my torments, for from my ſoul you cannot recal the ſentence of condemnation: therefore pack up my body in a deer ſkin, and encloſe it in a ſtone ſepulchre, and bind the cover with iron and lead, and ſurround it with three great chains. If I ſhall be ſafe for three nights, on the fourth bury me in the ground; tho' I fear the earth will not be willing to receive me on account

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quinquaginta ſint noctibus et miſſæ cantentur pro me tot diebus. Factum igitur eſt ut præceperat et nihil valuit. Primis enim duabus noctibus, cum chori clericorum pſalmos canerent circa Corpus, ſinguli dæmones, Oſtium eccleſiæ immani obice clauſum levi negotio confringentes, duas extremas catenas diruperant: media vero quæ operoſius elaborata eſt, illibata duravit. Tertia nocte circa Gallicantum, ſtrepitu advenientium hoſtium, omne Monaſterium viſum eſt a fundamentis moveri. Unus nempe vultu cæteris terribilior et ſtatura celſior, januas majori vi concuſſas in fragmenta dejecit, et arroganti geſtu acceſſit ad ſarcophagum, inclamatoque nomine, ut ſurgeret, imperavit. Qua reſpondente, neque præ vinculis: Solueris, inquit, et malo tuo. Statimque Catena, quæ cæterorum ferociam elucerat, nullo conamine ut ſtupam dirupit, operculum tumbæ pede depulit, et apprehenſa manu palam omnibus, ab Eccleſia extraxit ad fores, ubi paratus eſt equus niger ſuperbe hinniens, uncis ferreis per totum protuberantibus, ſuper quem miſera illa mulier impoſita, ab oculis intuentium cum toto ſodalitio diſparuit. Audiebantur tamen Clamores, per quatuor fere malliaria, miſerabiles ſuppetias deprecantes.

Ola. Mag. Hiſt. de Gent. Sept. Lib. iii, *Ca.* 20.

for his ſtrict attention to veracity, was nevertheleſs tainted with the contagion of the times, a belief in the powers of witchcraft and preternatural agency; he gives the ſtory of the Old Woman of Berkeley as an eſtabliſhed truth, in which ſentiment, with little or no variation of circumſtances, Olaus and Vincentius the French author concur. Koberg, the writer of the Nuremberg Chronicle, ſpeaks of it rather doubtingly as matter of report; but on the point material to the preſent queſtion there is but one opinion; as to the ſcene of action, all of them decifively agree it was in ENGLAND.

Malefica quedam auguriatrix in *Anglia*, fuit quam mortuam Demones horribiliter extraxerunt, Dum Clerici pſallerent, Et imponentes ſuper Equum terribilem per æra rapiunt. Clamores quoque terribiles (ut ferunt) per quatuor ferme miliaria audiebantur. [Anthony Koberg's Chronicle, large folio, printed at Nuremberg. A. D. 1493. Fol. 188 b.]

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count of my crimes. Let there be fifty choriſters at night, and let maſſes be ſung for me for ſo many days. It was done as ſhe commanded them, but to no avail. For the firſt two nights, when the choriſters were chanting pſalms around the body, the Dæmons, breaking the door of the church with little trouble, which was cloſed with a ſtrong bar, deſtroyed the extreme chains; but the middle one, which was formed ſomewhat ſtronger, continued unbroken; and on the third night as the cock crew, as at the ſound of an enemy approaching, the entire Church ſeemed to be moved from its foundation. Then one of the Dæmons in countenance fiercer and in ſtature taller than the reſt, broke into pieces the gates which were before ſhaken with great violence, and with an arrogant geſture approached the ſepulchre; and bawling out the woman's name commanded her to riſe. Who replying, I cannot on account of my chains: Now, ſays he, thou art looſed from them to thy own deſtruction. And immediately that chain, which baffled the fierceneſs of the other Dæmons, he deſtroyed with little trouble, as if it had been an hempen cord; the top of the tomb he drove off with his foot, and ſeizing hold of the hand of the woman in preſence of every body he dragged her forth from the church to the door, where a black horſe ſtood proudly neighing, with iron hooks projecting from every part of him, upon whom the miſerable woman being flung, vaniſhed from the ſight of the by-ſtanders, attended with his whole crew. Yet ſhouts of this unhappy woman entreating aſſiſtance were heard for nearly four miles.

THE following Letter was received juſt as the laſt ſheet of this new impreſſion of the preceding work was committed to preſs. The inſertion of it, though not without conſultation, may by ſome faſtidious readers be conſtrued vanity: be it ſo; to me, I freely acknowlege, *Dulce eſt laudari a laudato Viro.* The writer of it, is a

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gentleman whose various erudition and classical taste have secured to him an elevated rank among the Literati abroad, as well as in his own country *; at the same time that his conciliating manners, and, above all, the goodness of his heart, endear him more particularly to to the favoured circle of his friends and acquaintance; of which number, I have to boast the happiness of being one. Allow me, My dear Sir! thus publicly to acknowlege your kindness, and the pleasure I take on all occasions in subscribing myself

Yours most faithfully,

SAMUEL WHYTE.

Friday, June 27, 1800.

To SAMUEL WHYTE, Esq. &c.

DEAR SIR!

I LATELY read with pleasure, and I hope some profit, your Miscellany. Your Remarks are acute; the original Letters inestimable, and the Extracts curious and interesting.

As a work of so much merit must ere long reach another edition, permit me to remind you, that the story of the Mysterious Mother is fully detailed in the 9th vol. of the Spectator, No. 688, Dublin, 1748. It is also told by Bandello, who lays the scene at Navarre. See Note (y) p. 272 of an "Historical Memoir on Italian Tragedy." If you have not added this imperfect work to

* Member of the Royal Irish Academy; Fellow of the Literary and Antiquarian Society of Perth; Honorary Member of the Etruscan Academy of Cortona, and Member of the Arcadian Academy of Rome. In the year 1690, when that learned Society took the name by which it has since been and is now distinguished, "it was resolved, that each member should assume a pastoral name;" agreeable to this fundamental principle of the institution the pastoral name decreed by the Society to Mr. Walker on his admission, was EUBANTE TIRINZIO. [*See his Historical Memoir on Italian Tragedy, wherein is given a particular and very interesting account of that Institution, p. 208, passim.* EUBANTE.]

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to your collection, and would wish to consult it, you may, I believe, find a copy either in the Dublin, or the College Library.

If you do not mean to reprint your Miscellany very soon, perhaps you would think it right to print a supplementary sheet, containing the number in the Spectator, which I have pointed out, and a reference to the Tale of Bandello, You are, I believe, the first who has attempted to trace this story to its source.

You'll observe in the note to which I have directed your attention, that in line 14 'was' should have been 'were;' it was certainly so written; but this is one of the numerous typographical errors occasioned by my distance from the press. I envy you the correctness of your work. The literary character of an author often suffers from the carelessness of his printer.

I presume you know that we are indebted to the Leonora of Bürger for Dr. Aikin's beautiful Tale of Arthur and Matilda.

My charming friend, Mrs. Magan, I hope is well; have the goodness to make my best compliments acceptable to her, and to Mr. E. A. Whyte, &c. and believe me to be,

Dear Sir! very sincerely, &c.

St. Valeri, Bray,
14th May, 1800. JOSEPH COOPER WALKER.

P. S. Mr. Isaac Reed of London has commissioned me to send him a copy of your Miscellany: I have gotten one, which I shall forward in the course of a few days.

PURSUANT to the intimation of my valuable and highly esteemed friend, I now add the story of the Mysterious Mother, from the 9th volume of the Spectator, as it is called, p. 237 *. It is given by the conductor of that

* The 7th edit. London printed, and Dublin reprinted by S. Powel, 1735. It commenced Mond. Jan. 3d, 1715; but whatever its merit, it is not a genuine sequel to the admired periodical publication originally called the Spectator, the name it also goes by.

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that work, as an anſwer to a letter preceding, dated Friday, July 11th, 1715, with a few prefatory lines by way of introduction, running thus:—" I know of no better way of complying with my brother guardian's deſires, than in ſetting down the following hiſtory delivered to us among the writings of Mr. *Perkins*."

'A gentlewoman of great note, being left a widow, 'had her ſon trained up in her houſe, who now being 'come to an age of maturity, grew up, as in ſtature, ſo 'in wanton deſires, earneſtly ſoliciting her chambermaid 'to comply with his inclinations; ſhe had the grace not 'only to repel his offers, but wearied out with his wick-'ed importunities, to complain to her miſtreſs, of her 'young maſter's irregularities in behaviour towards her: 'the mother, out of a purpoſe to repreſs this wild hu-'mour in her ſon, bids the maid, out of a ſeeming com-'pliance, make appointment the night following with 'him, and that ſhe would change beds with the maid, 'and taſk the gentleman to ſome purpoſe. This being 'done in purſuance to her orders: The Devil tempted 'the mother; and, terrible as it is to hear, inſtead of 'chaſtiſing him, ſhe ſuffered herſelf to be embraced, and 'by him conceived a daughter. Finding herſelf grow 'big, weighed down by inward ſhame, to hinder it from 'appearing ſhe ſecretly retired to a diſtant part of the 'country, and left the child there to be educated with 'all care and ſecrecy. In ſome years ſhe thought pro-'per to bring home the concealed infant as a kinſwoman, 'and treated her like the child of a friend. The young 'virgin grew up to ſuch a degree of comelineſs in per-'ſon and behaviour, that the ſon, ſtill a ſingle man, and 'now of about one or two and thirty, fell paſſionately 'in love with her, and in ſhort, ignorantly married his 'own daughter. They lived together very lovingly and 'comfortably, and were the parents of many children. 'But the mother who knew it all, had, as it were, a 'whole hell in her boſom; ſtung one day more than or-'dinary with remorſe, and bitterly gnawed with the 'worm of conſcience, ſhe flew to the learned Divine

'who

'who wrote this ſtory, and was an eminent caſuiſt, for 'relief, and aſked the good man's advice, whether ſhe 'ſhould not put an end to that courſe of ſin, by reveal-'ing the matter: the Divine was of opinion, that as 'they lived innocently in their ignorance, ſhe ſhould re-pent in ſecret, and conceal the buſineſs.'

Spect. vol. 9, No. 688.

The ſame ſtory, probably derived from the ſame ſource, appeared in a pretty large miſcellaneous octavo; Dublin printed, A. D. 1749; preceded by an uncommonly numerous and ſplendid Liſt of Subſcribers, among whom were the Lord High Chancellor of Ireland, the Earls of Kildare, Antrim, Beſborough, &c. ſeveral of the Right Rev. Fathers of the Church, Ladies of diſtinction, and Gentlemen of firſt-rate talents, converſant in polite life, not only of Ireland, but of the Siſter Kingdom. The Rev. Dr. John Taylor of Iſleworth, Middleſex, took thirty-five copies. Thus in one ſhape or other it grew into notoriety, and became a current topic of diſcuſſion. Is it not then ſurpriſing and moſt unaccountable, that a Nobleman of Lord Orford's general information, ſo conſpicuous in the commonwealth of Letters, ſo eminently curious in his reſearches, and ſo courted by thoſe who had the beſt opportunities of aiding his purſuits and indulging his well known taſte, ſhould be ſo ill informed of the matter as his Lordſhip appears to have been in his diſcourſe annexed to his Tragedy, founded on a ſubject ſo extraordinary, which he nevertheleſs conceives a fact, and would have his readers believe ſo likewiſe, to which of courſe he could not be ſuppoſed indifferent? The volume alluded to lies now before me.

The Note referred to in Mr. Walker's Letter runs thus:—"Having been induced to dilate, perhaps impertinently, upon the Myſterious Mother, I ſhall take this occaſion

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occaſion to obſerve, that the fable upon which this inimitable Tragedy is built, is minutely detailed by Bandello, (*Nov.* 35, *part* ii.) who heard it related by the Queen of Navarre to his patroneſs, Goſtanza Rangona e Fregoſa. Bandello's Novel is thus intituled: "Un Gentiluomo Navarreſe ſpoſa una che era ſua ſorella e figliuola, non lo ſapendo." This ſtory alſo appears amongſt the Tales of the Queen of Navarre; but whether it was firſt given to the public by Bandello, or by her Majeſty, I cannot determine. *Le prime tre parte delle Novelle del Bandello*, were publiſhed at Lucca 1554, and the earlieſt edition of *L'Heptameron* of the Queen, mentioned by De Bure, (*Bibl. Inſtr. tom.* ii, *p.* 94, *Par.* 1765,) is that of Paris, 1560; but as the title-page of this edition adds "*remis en ordre par Claude Gruget*," there was probably an earlier."

Hiſt. Mem. on Ital. Trag. p. 272, 3. 4*to Lond.* 1799.

In the Monthly Review referred to, p. 157, we find a pamphlet [Lond. Cooper, 1751,] with ſome crafty local modifications, a mere echo of the Italian ſtory, deſervedly reprobated; but it is plain the literary inquiſitors of thoſe days were ignorant of its previous exiſtence.

"As this narrative (ſay thoſe gentlemen) appears to us as a piece of fiction, we ſhall ſay nothing more of it, than that the ſtory is laid in the time of Oliver Cromwell, and that the publication of caſes of this ſort ought never to be encouraged, even if proved to be fact, as the knowledge of ſuch unnatural, and (happily) uncommon crimes cannot poſſibly be attended with any good conſequences: as examples, they will probably never deter others; but may inſpire people with thoughts of ſuch practices as otherwiſe might never have entered their imaginations."

Lord Orford's Myſterious Mother, the offſpring of this extravagant Tale, made its public appearance in print, A. D. 1781, and tho' never exhibited on a London ſtage, an Iriſh Manager took the advantage of its novelty for a night. The writer of the preſent article ſome twenty

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twenty years before attempted a Tragedy on the ſame ſubject; a juvenile eſſay, which, ſcarcely finiſhed, was committed to the flames; (v. p. 103) but this we may conclude was not its firſt appearance in that character. This, or a ſtory nearly a-kin, had furniſhed buſineſs for the Tragic Muſe ſo early as the year 1640, if not earlier. Tinctured however ſtrongly with the marvelous, the ſtory marvelouſly crept into credit, and was on all hands induſtriouſly circulated; a decided argument of its falſity: Calumny or imputation of guilt never wants abettors. But to ſhew the frailty of our confidence in the retailers of ſcandal, even when from their own perſonal knowlege they take upon them to vouch for the facts related, we need only ſum up the evidence in the caſe before us.

The Right Honourable Dramatiſt mentions the ſubject of his piece as a poſitive fact, which occurred in the reign of King William, and, as by circumſtances it appears, in the dioceſe of Canterbury, imparted by the unfortunate culprit herſelf to the Archbiſhop, Tillotſon.

The Author of the pamphlet brought forward by the Reviewers, aſſerts it to have happened in the North of Scotland in Cromwell's time; and that He himſelf was in habits of intimacy with the parties; ſome of whoſe deſcendants were living, near the ſcene of action, as the Author's Grand-ſon aſſures us, in his preface, A. D. 1751, when he committed, purſuant to his Anceſtor's intentions, the narrative to preſs.

A German Author, whoſe name and addition have eſcaped me, records it as an event univerſally known to have happened at Prague, in a family of his own particular acquaintance there; all natives of Bohemia.

The 9th volume of the Spectator gives it as an undeniable fact, related in the works of the Rev. Mr. Perkins, from the guilty Mother's own mouth, who had applied to that pious and eminent caſuiſt for ſpiritual conſolation.

Bandello, who has left the ſtory written in choice Italian, deriving his knowlege of it from her Majeſty of Navarre,

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Navarre, aſcribes the unfortunate rencounter to a Gentleman of that Country. Bandello's account appeared A. D. 1554.

The Queen of Navarre herſelf, in her own account of the matter, publiſhed at Paris 1650, if not earlier, lays the ſcene of it as a true ſtory in Languedoc, under the reign of Louis XI. of France.

Biſhop Taylor in his great work called *Ductor Dubitantium*, on the authority of Comitolus, a Roman Civilian, ſtates it "as a ſtrange and rare caſe happening at Venice." The Biſhop's book, a thick folio, was publiſhed A. D. 1659.

The works of Comitolus, who probably was the original reporter, and gives it, one would rather ſuppoſe, as a fiction of law, I am not converſant in; but I well recollect to have heard, when a boy, a ſimilar ſtory told of an Iriſh family, of conſequence, in one of the provinces; with this difference, that it was his Nurſe by whom the amorous young Spark had a Daughter, whom it was his misfortune afterwards to take for better for worſe; and a Gentleman well known was actually pointed out to me in the ſtreets of Dublin as a lineal deſcendant from the iſſue of that inceſtuous connection.

Is there a Court in Europe that, under ſuch circumſtances, would not diſmiſs the Bill?

Good-Friday, April 16th, 1802.

Page 215, notes, l. 6, *for* quas, *read* quæ.
220, ditto, l. 13, . . æra, . . . aëra.

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INCIDENTAL REFLECTIONS.

LORD ORFORD, Mr. Walker correctly obſerves,* deeply regretted the choice of his ſubject, and the Reviewers are certainly right, " the publication of caſes of this ſort ought never to be encouraged, even if proved to be fact:" But, in tracing ſuch apocryphal reports to their ſource, if we can prove them to be falſe, we are ſurely juſtified in the attempt; for it not only affords a leſſon to credulity, but in a great meaſure deprives them of their ſting. The reaſons for proſcribing the Myſterious Mother, will equally affect the ſtory of Oedipus, Phædra and Hippolitus, Caunus and Byblis, *cum multis aliis*, not only to the ſuppreſſion of many of our modern Plays, but to the utter excluſion of Ovid, and a majority of both the Greek and Roman Poets from our Schools, who with all their boaſted excellencies, not only incorporate vice, but ſanction the commiſſion of it, by the example and practice of their Gods!! † Scraps of morality and ſententious obſervations are indeed to be picked up thinly ſcattered in their voluminous pages: Or, as was ſaid of the figure of Beau Naſh between the buſts of Newton and Pope, " Wiſdom and Wit are little ſeen, but Folly at full length;" and we are to rely on the thoughtleſs inattention (in this caſe happily characteriſtic) of youth, to preſerve their warm and ſuſceptible imaginations from ſucking in the poiſon. Plato, himſelf poetical, baniſhed Homer from his Republic; more juſtly upon a moral ſyſtem might Virgil be baniſhed from our ſeminaries of Education. This is free language, and I well know to what ſtrictures I expoſe myſelf with the bigots to antiquity in the uſe of it. ' Bigots to antiquity! this is not an age of bigotry; this is the Age of Reaſon, Liberty and Equality;' well then, not to break ſquares with your pancratical fraternity, truce with that pretty cynical curl of the lip! upon the known principles of the age, I am not

* Hiſtorical Memoir on Italian Tragedy, 4to. p. 272. ſpeaking of the Myſterious Mother. London 1799.

† *Practice of their Gods*, vide Note 1, *poſth.*

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bound by prescription, and my charter to privilege of speech is on equality with theirs. How many petit-maitre philosophers, affectedly squeamish and prudishly severe, if in a book of religious description they peradventure stumble upon any word or expression which their depraved fancies can torture into a meaning never meant, will reprobate it in toto, and without benefit of clergy devote it to the pit; yet in the same instant, without turning up their noses, can swallow and very composedly digest, "*Formosum pastor Corydon ardebat Alexin.*" . . . 'Yes, Sir! but you know how that is accounted for.' I know it is accounted for very lamely; in a way that does no honour to the writer, nor credit to his advocates, if possible making the matter worse: I know it is accounted for in a way that the Ancients themselves did not account for it. Juvenal, as well as Martial, who from proximity of time, as well as the advantage of local habitation, had the best opportunities of knowing, takes the plain words in their plain meaning; in the obvious sense which the tenour of other parts of his writings does not discountenance. The testimony of Juvenal is pointedly explicit:

Nam si Virgilio puer, et tolerabile desit
Hospitium, caderent omnes à crinibus hydri: SAT. VII. l. 69.

Dryden, a zealous stickler for his Master, as he affects to style the courtly Flatterer of the Italian Usurper, finding appearances so strongly against him, has recourse to certain Platonic reveries, and argues the question in the abstract.* Others, it is likewise urged, on vague and suspicious authority have been exposed to obloquy. The observation is founded in truth; yet its construction depends on gratuitous analogies, and

* The life of Virgil and the essay prefixed to Dryden's translation of the pastorals, have by many been ascribed to his friend Wm. Walsh, Esq. on somewhat better authority it appears he owed them to the friendship of the learned Dr. Knightly Chetwood, afterwards dean of Gloucester, and for a length of time they were currently received as the production of his own pen. Be that as it may, they are his by adoption, and in all relative disquisitions, he alone appears the offensible party.

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and might lead to an injurious extenſion of the adage, "No ſmoke without fire;" it however ſuggeſts the propriety of ſteering clear of offence; but is of little moment in oppoſition to facts. The party accuſed is cited to anſwer for himſelf, and the accuſation is not on vague and ſuſpicious authority; it reſts on the evidence of his own confeſſion, in his life time given under his hand; the authenticity of which has never been queſtioned; but though thouſands beſides were involved in the ſame predicament, the crimination of thouſands is no abſolution for the individual. On the ground of extenuation his apologiſt has indeed hit off an undeniable matter of fact, "in the whole paſtoral there is not one immodeſt word." The ſame is echoed by Dr. Trapp, with a ſcandalous tag, ill beſeeming his function; hardly aware, we ſhould ſuppoſe, how effectually the tables might be turned upon him. There is, however, nothing very ſingular in the diſcovery; it is at beſt, but a ſort of negative recommendation, for which no great allowances are due.* Downright groſſneſs is not the dialect of adepts; for as our admirable moral Bard pertinently obſerves,

Immodeſt words admit of no defence,
And want of decency is want of ſenſe.

Waſh

* "That not an immodeſt word is in it," I have often heard aſſerted of confeſſedly one of the moſt infamous productions that ever diſgraced a London preſs. In the month of Auguſt 1787, taking a turn before dinner up the bird-cage walk, in company with the learned and ingenious Edmund Burton, of Weſtminſter, Eſq. he directed my attention to a pale emaciated figure, ſhabbily appareled, whom he recognifed ſitting on the middle bench, nearly oppoſite the paſſage at which we entered; and, with ſome indignation, adverting to the pernicious publication alluded to, told me that was the author of it; a man of birth, education and talents, the Petronius of his day, ſoliciting alms! Mr. Burton, partly at my inſtance, accoſted him by name, and having waited till he finiſhed a brief account of the wretched condition to which he was reduced; in the bitter ebb of life, deſerted by every acquaintance upon earth, labouring under accumulated infirmities, and periſhing with want, he threw into his hat half-a-crown, and turned from him with merited contempt. . . *Petronius* was Maſter of the Revels in the court of NERO.

Want of ſenſe is conſtructively folly, and folly is the characteriſtic of fools: now though there are fools who would paſs for wits, the converſe of the propoſition is not true, there are no wits who would paſs for fools; and though, not much to the ornament of this miraculous age, there be ſome reputed rational creatures of that heterogeneous caſt, "which ſtrain at a gnat and ſwallow a camel," the name of Maro has never been implicated in the charge of wanting ſenſe. On any topic he choſe to handle, the abſence of ſuch words as muſt have a repulſive effect, though we muſt be ſilent as to the purity and cleanlineſs of his ideas, is perfectly compatible with his merited reputation for judgment; we may farther add, from the teſtimony of ancient annals and the concurrence of commentators, his opportunities of experience. That ſuch a plea ſhould be thought of, and by Dryden too, a wit of the Second Charles's diſſolute reign, is ſomewhat extraordinary: were the comparatively innocent Sedleys of thoſe days ſuch novices in "the prevailing, gentle art," as to ſhock the very faculties of eyes and ears; for ſure no other form of ſpeech could adequately ſuit the ſubject? 'Tis the perfection of wickedneſs to veil its nefarious purpoſes, that its deſtined victims may liſten with compoſure, and not till the poiſon operates ſuſpect they have imbibed it. We know by ſad experience in our own times, the aſſaſſin does not blow a trumpet in the ſtreets, and flouriſh the murderous weapon vapouring in the ſun; no, he warily keeps it enſheathed, and cloaks his black intents till the moment of deſtruction. Beſides, reverting to the poetical character, his cavalier treatment of the ſex on every occaſion, to ſpeak of it in the mildeſt terms, is a trait peculiarly unfortunate, in no reſpect reconcilable to the notion of a laudable attachment;* and without the aggreſſion of offenſive words, his addreſs

* It is a truth drawn from an attentive peruſal of Virgil, and confirmed by the writer of his life before mentioned, "There is hardly the character

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dreſs is too ardently impaſſioned; his aim too particularly directed to preſume it a random ſhot. The very firſt line definitively lays open the purport of the Eclogue; in a ſingle word, though not abſolutely an immodeſt one, we have the maſter-key to the whole. We find it one of his very earlieſt productions;* but to ſuppoſe, by ſuch an avowed proſtitution of talent, it was calculated merely to conciliate patronage would be a complication of guilt, and the bittereſt invective, it is charitably to be hoped unwarranted, that could be uttered againſt a vile and an abandoned age. That he was not abſolutely *in propria perſona* criminal, is at beſt, asDavid Hume might probably phraſe it, a matter of very academic faith; his not being in his writings hoſtile to the cauſe, is a point indiſputable. To Ignorance we dare not impute it; in general a thankleſs office; and whatever ſophiſtry may plead, which like Belial, the prince of Sophiſts, "can make the worſe appear the better reaſon," his cauſe muſt be conſtitutionally weak that depends on the crutches of ſubtle diſtinctions. Integrity is its own beſt ſupport. If a man of acknowlegedparts, with a convenient portion of moral duplicity, will aſſociate with felons, connive at malpractices, and open the door to tranſgreſſion, he muſt be a confident partizan who can aſcribe it to innocence in the intention, or any hitherto known principle of rectitude. In the impartial eye of juſtice acceſſaries are deemed principals; by parity of reaſoning the writer who abets

character of one good woman to be found in his poems: he uſes the word Mulier [woman] but once in the whole Æneid, then too by way of contempt." The female characters introduced, he contrives to place, often in flat contradiction to hiſtory, in an infamous and deſpicable light; his very Goddeſſes, a ſet of mere Viragos and Demireps, make every whit as ill a figure as their prototypes of clay. His Shepherdeſſes too, if not downright wantons, are moſtly repreſented of a very coming diſpoſition. Virgil with a princely fortune [eſtimated at eighty thouſand pounds ſterling] in his fifty-ſecond year died a Bachelor.

* Moſt probably, as ſome contend, the very firſt, written Æt. 23; which is not generally reputed the age of perfect innocence, and wholly bars the trite and frivolous excuſe of being *a very young man.*

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abets the cauſe of vice commits his reputation to ſuicide, and by whatever winding path he, or his party, may have the addreſs to creep out, he becomes amenable to the ſtatutes in ſuch caſes made and provided. In the verſion of Juvenal, under the auſpices of Dryden, as the afore-cited diſtich is rendered, as well as in his previous account of the Paſtorals, particularizing the Alexis, he in a great meaſure relinquiſhes his defence. In his more immediate capacity of tranſlator, neither his verſion of that paſtoral, nor of the congenial paſſages, of which there occur not a few, in the third and ſubſequent paſtorals, ſhew him very particularly diſpoſed to mince matters; but faithful to the text, accompanying his ſaid maſter to the very verge of decency, without ceremony, he proceeds in his work; a ſingle inſtance may ſuffice the oppoſing counſel learned in claſſic lore for the preſent.

Parcius iſta viris tamen obſcienda memento.
Novimus et qui te, tranſverſa, &c.

we need not go farther. It may be conſtrued a ſtroke of country raillery; but there is ſo much of horſe-play in the joke, that under the circumſtance it appears, it muſt neceſſarily be taken in earneſt. Dryden's marked conſtruction of the paſſage, perfectly harmonizing with the original, as he ſignificantly points it, furniſhes an opinion that muſt be relied upon, and a teſtimony that cannot be ſuſpected.

Monſieur Bayle, a ſubtle ſcribe of equivocal reputation, and ſome of your modern ſcholiaſts, in their partiality to genius, fondly perſuading themſelves virtue and talents neceſſarily aſſimilate, have endeavoured to palliate what in their hearts they could not but condemn: the argument on temporizing principles, in the moſt favourable light, is of untoward aſpect; depravity in a bold hand is written on the face of it; ſubjects were not wanting for the exerciſe of genius; his election was optional, not matter of compulſion, and if vice was not the inſtigator, why was the imputation incurred? The French Critics eſpecially, with characteriſtic verſatility,

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verſatility, by their ingenuity and cleverneſs vainly thinking to do away the ſtigma, explain it in a way that to the abomination of the crime ſuperadds the turpitude of panderiſm; for which the acknowleged excellencies of all his other writings can ſcarce make atonement. O! that, as precedents were not wanting, ſome conſummate Philologer, an Ariſtarchus or a Priſcian, had happily hit upon the expedient of confounding, at leaſt in this caſe, the Gender Maſculine, with the Common-of-two, the Doubtful or even the Epicene; or if the Critics, with their wonted facility, had diſcarded the leading word "*ardebat*," as the ſpurious inſertion of ſome blundering tranſcriber, and ſubſtituted a reading of leſs prominent and energetic import in its ſtead; it might have afforded ſcope for a metamorphoſis worthy of Ovid, and fairly put to a nonplus every objector.

Notwithſtanding all that has been ſaid, pro and con, on ſo delicate a point, to deal impartially, and with due deference to the characters oppoſed, it remains to enquire, whether and in what inſtances, the idea ſo unworthily adopted by that celebrated writer is adhered to or impugned in his ſubſequent productions of ſimilar deſcription? If nothing farther appeared, even a rigid cenſor, in reſpect to his poetical preeminence, might be diſpoſed to wink at it as a ſolitary offence, and to conſider it as a venial ſlip of youth in an unguarded moment, or the hurry of inadvertence, from which none are exempt: It is to be regretted, that is not the caſe. In the ſubſequent Eclogues he battens on the ſame ſoil; more than once indulges the propenſity, and appears not to deſire or leave room for any apology on that ſcore. The paſſion of the groves is not a favourite theme of his; his moſt decided champion acknowleges "his paſtorals are full of invectives againſt love." His ſhepherds incidentally glance at the ſubject, and now and then ſay a civil thing of ſome ruſtic wanton they condeſcend to diſtinguiſh;* but that is by the by, and

as

* *Ruſtic Wanton.* . laſciva puella, Ecl. iii. 1. l. 64. vide Notes 2, 3, *poſth.*

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as it were, croſſing the ſcent; the game firſt ſtarted is not loſt to the view. If Damoetas has preſents for Galatea, Menalcas has ſuperior allurements in petto for Amyntas; if Phyllis find favour in the ſtrains of Thyrſis, ſhe has alſo the mortification of finding in Lycidas a formidable rival. In the whole compaſs of the paſtorals, the moſt natural of the paſſions is but twice taken up at any length, and then rather as a ſecondary conſideration in compliment to others; not any affair of his own; but always in terms of reprobation debaſed by ſome ſpurious accompaniment at the expence of the women.* No one, it can well be preſumed, ſave haply a bird of the ſame feather, will ſeriouſly take upon him to affirm the ſecond, excluſively confined to his own feelings, is an exception. 'Tis true in the ſeventh, ſmit with unuſual complaiſance for the ſex, he rallies his powers, and ſports an invitation to a Mermaid;† but in a ſtrain of more cordial devotion ſome dozen verſes after, without the leaſt apparent temptation, except that it was always next to heart, recurring to the ſubject of the ſecond, the ſelf-ſame "formoſus Alexis" under the ſelf-ſame deſignation, with a certain inkling of ſucceſs, is brought again upon the tapis. This is a clincher; yet, as if there wanted more to prove his levelling notions of the influence of the fair, in the tenth Eclogue, and other inſtances by the way might be collected, he mingles intereſts, as muſicians with harmony ſometimes mingle diſcords, and inſinuates his friend and patron Gallus caſts a ſheep's eye upon a Moor. Unity of character is ſtrictly preſerved; his interlocutors are all males; not a female figures in the ſcene: under the paſtoral names Corydon and Menalcas, commentators admit, the author typifies himſelf, and, if the commentators were ſilent, he himſelf puts it out of doubt;‡ but, Corydon or Menalcas, he alone appears tenacious of his ground, and ſtanding almoſt ſingle in the cauſe ſeems every

* *The Women*, vide Note 3. † *Mermaid*, Neriné Galatea, vide note *poſtb.*
‡ *Puts it out of doubt*, vide Ecl. v. l. 85. 6. 7. Ecl. ix. l. 7 *paſſim.*

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every where without exception " the tainted wether of the flock," nothing jealous that the caſual regards afforded to the oppoſite ſex are paid to them by others. Touching the tender paſſion, the Mantuan ſwains in general can hardly be charged with being romantically conſtant, or ſentimentally nice; their eulogiums are uniformly in kind confined to exterior allurement, and all their ſolicitudes, directed for the moſt part by mere animal inſtinct, centre in the indulgence of ſenſual appetite: warmed, we may ſuppoſe, by a more vertical ſun, they ſeem to have as little notion of the felicities of a domeſtic fireſide as the flocks they feed upon the plains. Corydon and Menalcas, were it directed to a proper object, ſhew undeniably the enthuſiaſm of paſſion, and are every where the moſt fervent in their purſuit; the poet too with viſible predilection, pertinacious in his choice, has in all caſes of conteſt given them decidedly the advantage:

Ex illo, Corydon, Corydon eſt tempore nobis.

A ſentence (though not without a tincture of vanity) to which every man of learning, diſcrimination and taſte, if juſtified by the cauſe, muſt have implicitly ſubſcribed: but how ſhall the cauſe be juſtified? The circumſtances taken in their unadorned ſtate will not admit of it, and the pleaders are at no extraordinary pains to conceal its deformity; it cannot be called love, and the glowing metaphors in which they dreſs their conceptions are inadmiſſible in the vocabulary of friendſhip. If to give it figuratively be permitted, neither the main courſe the entremets, nor the goût with which they are ſeaſoned reliſh of a platonic entertainment. It might poſſibly anſwer well enough for High-life, meaning the High-life of thoſe times; but can ſcarcely be conceived compatible with the innocence and ſimplicity of Paſtoral-life in any times. Granting, as it is ſaid, the vice were the vice of the age, and that the Great-ones of the age were poetically intended; the characters

are nominally ſhepherds, and the imagery and alluſions taken from the cuſtomary haunts of that ſecluded order, to paint them with the vices of the Great, I ſtill mean the Great of thoſe days, is a violation of the coſtume; conſequently, abſtracted from all perſonal application, and ſaving the reſpect due to ſo eminent a writer, a palpable error in judgment, and together with the reſt an inſurmountable objection to his book. This objection, it need ſcarcely be intimated, is made with limitation to the book of paſtorals, which as well as moſt of the claſſics, without carefully pruning can never be ſafely admitted in a code of education. (*) This may be all aſcribed to an affectation of ſingularity, want of judgment, want of taſte, want of knowlege, want of what you will; you cannot ſay 'I never read the book.' I have not taken up without examination the vague, unfounded deluſions of others, and meanly and diſingenuouſly appropriated them as orthodox to myſelf; it cannot be aſcribed to wilful blindneſs as well as ſingularity. What I have ſaid is the pure reſult of mature conſideration, and an impartial peruſal of the work; if treaſon againſt the Majeſty of Virgil, it is not an offence againſt the laws of my country, covertly intended to diſturb the peace and good order of ſociety; it was not written with the view of impairing the authority of truth, for the malignant gratification of undermining the conſolations of the ſorrowful and afflicted; it cannot be conſtrued blaſphemy.

To inferences drawn from ſpeculations of this ſort the buſy corps of anti-canonical declaimers are abundantly partial; in the propagation of their tenets they are equally aſſiduous and expert; not only the avenues to ſcience, and all the uſual channels of communication are dammed up with them; novels, which in their origin were a ſource of harmleſs amuſement, are by progreſſive ſtages of deterioration, become vehicles of the

* Vide note (e) poſth. p. 241.

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the moſt illuſive and pernicious opinions: To copy, verbatim, their exaggerated pages, or make an oſtentatious parade of references, would be quite in the line of practice, ſpreading the poiſon and advertizing, to induce unwary paſſengers; we may be ſatisfied with the ſpecification of a ſingle paragraph in a work ſufficiently notorious, which, how widely ſo ever different and reprehenſible in its primary concoction, is, *mutatis mutandis*, adapted to the preſent occaſion.

'A prudent Father, while he admires the beauties of the Poet, ſhould be convinced, that unreſtricted, no reading more improper could be permitted to boys; many of the paſſages can only tend to excite ideas the worſt calculated for a human breaſt; every thing is ſo inſidiouſly coloured, and with apt incitements ſo ſpeciouſly enforced, the moſt unprincipled libertine could ſcarce wiſh a choicer vade mecum, or exerciſe more addreſs in the trade of ſeduction; too frequently has it given the firſt alarm to the ſleeping paſſions, and inculcated the rudiments of the moſt deteſtable vice: yet theſe are the books recommended for ſtudy and improvement.' Are ſuch things fit for the inſpection of youth, who are to be Huſbands and Fathers, perhaps LEGISLATORS? Are they not rather fit, by nocturnal ſkulkers in obſcure corners and blind alleys, to be buried in the brothels of Sodom? (5) In aid of poſitions thus heretically featured, though, (not in the cuſtomary ſtyle of argument truſting to confident and unqualified aſſertion) they are ſupported by fair deduction and an impartial recurrence to facts, ſomething more in the way of elucidation might be looked for. Beſides being perfectly conformable to ancient uſage, an opportunity ſo inviting to a diſplay of reading and recondite Erudition, "might almoſt tempt a grave good man to ſcandal." Literary ſpeculators we know will ſometimes deviate from the obvious line of rectitude, and aſſume a latitude to indulge their own conceits at the expence of every thing held ſacred and dear. But our Readers

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no doubt will diſpenſe with ſuch Rhetorical fopperies, which in this caſe could anſwer no good end either of profit or pleaſure reſpecting the writer in queſtion. There is alſo a drawback in our way not uncommon to others; we are greatly deſtitute of materials. Whatever luminous and delectable tomes may have been penned, or ſubtle manœuvres practiſed to diſſeminate foreign principles, encourage ſcepticiſm, and countenance vice, by the Miſſioners of theſe our enlightened and liberal times; ſome of whom, it cannot be denied, have taken uncommon ſtrides to ſhew the nature and extent of their qualifications, for the pious purpoſe, not uncharitably to ſpeak, of making proſelytes; the inſtruction of novices, and the gratification, no doubt, of the initiated; thanks to the homely virtues of our plain and ſimple-minded anceſtors, the Engliſh language affords no precedents for the encouragement of unnatural crimes. "We have not yet ſo much the Roman in us."

Heavy as the charge indiſputably is againſt a writer that ſo univerſally challenges admiration, it is by no means new; it is coeval with the compoſition itſelf. The light it is accordingly placed in, reſpecting its probable influence over the riſing generations, may be ſomewhat peculiar; but this at leaſt our dealers in new gloſſes and hazardous concluſions cannot well take in dudgeon; preſcription is loudly in its favour, and their own daily exhibitions teem with copious exemplars: one of the moſt ſtriking appears in the paſſage alluded to, of which the texture of the preſent ſtrictures is partly a parody; in part an humble imitation; and though the poſitions in their original ſtate, rather dogmatically inſiſted on, may by certain ſcrupulous readers be thought wantonly, if not prophanely applied, they are nevertheleſs in their preſent form appoſite; and, for the honour of human nature would it were not ſo! undeniably concluſive.

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*** AS Education is a ſubject of all others the moſt momentous to Society in general, as well as to the welfare and happineſs of the individual, it is of all others a ſubject that from every individual demands the moſt ſerious conſideration. The ableſt writers in moſt foreign tongues have thought it not beneath their attention, and in our own we have numerous treatiſes for its advancement not inferior to any; but ſtill the ſubject is far from being exhauſted. Many abuſes, from the inveterate force of cuſtom, ſtill remain; and it is hazarding little to ſay, that moſt of the deſtructive tenets and complicated evils which prevail in theſe critical times owe their malignancy and may be decidedly traced to that ſource. A thorough conviction of the truth of this obſervation gave birth to the preceding pages, which, with all their imperfections, will in the breaſt of candour plead the author's apology. He has no other to offer for his intruſion at this perilous criſis, which he truſts will not be deemed unſeaſonable or improper. Had he ſtood alone in the cauſe, he would, with deference to more competent judges, have thought himſelf juſtified in the motive; but he is ſupported by the higheſt authorities. A few paſſages more immediately pointed, he takes leave particularly to recommend to the notice of his readers, who may not have opportunity or perhaps inclination to conſult the volumes from which they are extracted.

It was obſerved, that if we muſt ſtudy the ancients, with the virtues we cannot avoid in ſome degree imbibing the vices of the ancients, and notwithſtanding their mighty recommendations, it muſt be acknowleged, there is ſcarcely a vice conceivable under Heaven they do not one way or other inculcate. Juvenal, Horace, Terence, Petronius and even the chaſte and elaborate Virgil, as has been ſufficiently ſhewn, might be produced in evidence of the fact. Dryden himſelf confeſſes as much in the preface to his fables, where,

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in anſwer to Collier's charge of licentiouſneſs, recanting his own errors, he ſays, "They who have written comments on thoſe Poets [Ariſtophanes and Plautus] or on Horace, Juvenal and Martial, have explained ſome vices, which without their interpretation had been unknown to modern times." The conceſſion, it cannot be denied, was in a manner forced from Dryden, who in his partiality as a tranſlator would ſoften the charge againſt the originals by throwing the odium more directly upon the commentators; but the commentators would not have been expoſed to the attack, if the original authors had not previouſly incurred cenſure, and led them to the ground: thus, in ſtriving to weaken, he not only admits, but abſolutely enforces the accuſation againſt them.

The truly-learned and judicious Dr. Watts, an experienced guide and friend of youth, gives his ſentiments more at large, and more ingenuouſly ſpeaks to the point. Of the work from which the ſubſequent extract is taken, Dr. Johnſon, in his Lives of the Engliſh Poets, gives the following character: Dr. Johnſon was not in the habit of paying unmerited compliments; he alſo had made education his particular object; and his commendation, which throws great weight into the ſcale, is deliberately given without exception or reſerve.

"Few books have been peruſed by me with greater pleaſure than his [Dr. Watts's] *Improvement of the Mind*, of which the radical principles may be found in Locke's *Conduct of the Underſtanding*; but they are ſo expanded and ramified by Watts, as to confer on him the merit of a work in the higheſt degree uſeful and pleaſing. Whoever has the care of inſtructing others, may be charged with deficience in his duty if this book is not recommended." [JOHNSON's Life of Dr. WATTS.]

Dr. Watts thus takes up the Subject* . . . "Here, I think, I have

* Improvement of the Mind. 2 Vol. London 1784, vol. 1ſt p. 112. . . Do. 1 vol. London, 1801, p. 61. paſſim.

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I have a fair occaſion given me to conſider that queſtion which has been often debated in converſation, viz. Whether the teaching a ſchool full of boys to learn Latin by the Heathen poets, as Ovid in his Epiſtles, and the ſilly fables of his metamorphoſis; Horace, Juvenal, and Martial, in their impure odes, ſatires and epigrams, &c. is ſo proper and agreeable a practice in a chriſtian country?"

"I grant the language and ſtyle of thoſe men who wrote in their own native tongue, muſt be more pure and perfect in ſome nice elegancies and peculiarities, than modern writers of other nations who have imitated them; and it is owned alſo, that the beauties of their poeſy may much excel: but in either of theſe things, boys cannot be ſuppoſed to be much improved or injured by one or the other."

"It ſhall be confeſſed too, that modern poets in every living language, have brought into their works ſo many words, epithets, phraſes, and metaphors, from the heathen fables and ſtories of their gods and heroes, that in order to underſtand theſe modern writers, it is neceſſary to know a little of thoſe ancient follies: but it may be anſwered, that a good dictionary, or ſuch a book as the Pantheon, or hiſtory of thoſe gentile deities, &c. may give ſufficient information of thoſe ſtories, ſo far as they are neceſſary and uſeful to ſchool-boys."

"I will grant yet further, that lads who are deſigned to make great ſcholars or divines, may by reading theſe Heathen poets, be taught better to underſtand the writings of the ancient fathers againſt the Heathen religion; and they learn here what ridiculous fooleries the gentile nations believed as the articles of their faith, what wretched and foul idolatries they indulged and practiſed as duties of religion, for want of the light of divine revelation. But this perhaps may be learnt as well either by the Pantheon, or ſome other collection, as at ſchool; or after they have left the ſchool, they may read what

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what their own inclinations lead them to, and whatſoever of this kind may be really uſeful for them."

"But the great queſtion is, Whether all theſe advantages which have been mentioned, will compenſate for the long months and years that are waſted among their incredible and trifling romances, their falſe and ſhameful ſtories of the gods and goddeſſes and their amours, and the lewd heroes and vicious poets of the Heathen world? Can theſe idle and ridiculous tales be of any real and ſolid advantage in human life? Do they not too often defile the mind with vain, miſchievous and impure ideas? Do they not ſtick long upon the fancy, and leave an unhappy influence upon youth? Do they not tincture the imagination with folly and vice very early, and prevent it from all that is good and holy?"

"Upon the whole ſurvey of things it is my opinion, that for almoſt all boys who learn this tongue, it would be much ſafer to be taught Latin poeſy (as ſoon and as far as they can need it) from thoſe excellent tranſlations of David's pſalms, which are given us by Buchanan in the various meaſures of Horace; and the lower claſſes had better read Dr. Johnſton's tranſlation of theſe pſalms, another elegant writer of the Scots nation, inſtead of Ovid's epiſtles; for he has turned the ſame pſalms perhaps with greater elegancy into elegiac verſe, whereof the learned W. Benſon, Eſq. has lately publiſhed a noble edition, and I hear that theſe pſalms are honoured with an increaſing uſe in the ſchools of Holland and Scotland. A ſtanza, or a couplet of theſe writers would now and then ſtick upon the minds of youth, and would furniſh them infinitely better with pious and moral thoughts, and do ſomething towards making them good men and Chriſtians."

"A little book collected from the pſalms of both theſe tranſlators, Buchanan and Johnſton, and a few other Chriſtian poets,

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poets, would be of excellent uſe for ſchools to begin their inſtructions in Latin poeſy; and I am well aſſured this would be richly ſufficient for all thoſe in lower rank, who never deſign a learned profeſſion, and yet cuſtom has fooliſhly bound them to learn that language."

"But leſt it ſhould be thought hard to caſt Horace and Virgil, Ovid and Juvenal entirely out of the ſchools, I add, if here and there a few lyric odes, or pieces of ſatires, or ſome epiſodes of heroic verſe, with here and there an epigram of Martial, all which ſhall be clear and pure from the ſtains of vice and impiety, and which may inſpire the mind with noble ſentiments, fire the fancy with bright and warm ideas, or teach leſſons of morality and prudence, were choſen out of thoſe ancient Roman writers for the uſe of the ſchools, and were collected and printed in one moderate volume, or two at the moſt, it would be abundantly ſufficient proviſion out of the Roman poets for the inſtruction of boys in all that is neceſſary in that age of life." (e)

"Surely Juvenal himſelf would not have the face to vindicate the maſters who teach boys his 6th ſatire, and many paragraphs of ſeveral others, when he himſelf has charged us,

Nil dictu fœdum, viſuque hæc limina tangat
Intra quæ puer eſt. Sat. 14.

Suffer no lewdneſs, nor indecent ſpeech,
The apartment of the tender youth to reach." DRYDEN.

(e) A publication of a few of the Claſſics for the uſe of Schools, omitting the licentious and objectionable paſſages with which they abound, has been partially attempted; but has not met with the attention and encouragement ſuch a laudable and highly-requiſite undertaking deſerved; which, amidſt the general outcry and rage for reform, is a caſe truly paradoxical; for in this there could be no apprehenſion of danger from innovation, and it muſt be attended with ſignal advantage.

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The ſame excellent Author likewiſe farther adviſes. . . .

" Have a care of ſuddenly determining any one queſtion on which the determination of any kindred or parallel caſes will eaſily or naturally follow. Take heed of receiving any wrong turn in your early judgment of things; be watchful, as far as poſſible, againſt any falſe bias which may be given to the underſtanding, eſpecially in younger years. The indulgence of ſome one ſilly opinion, or the giving credit to one fooliſh fable, lays the mind open to be impoſed upon by many. The ancient Romans were taught to believe, that Romulus and Remus the founders of their ſtate and empire, were expoſed in the woods and nurſed by a Wolf: this ſtory prepared their minds for the reception of any tales of the like nature relating to other countries. Trogus Pompeius would enforce the belief, that one of the antient kings of Spain was alſo nurſed and ſuckled by a Hart, from the fable of Romulus and Remus. It was by the ſame influence they learned to give up their hopes and fears to omens and ſooth-ſaying, when they were once perſuaded that the greatneſs of their empire and the glory of Romulus their founder, were predicted by the happy omen of twelve Vultures appearing to him when he ſought where to build the city: They readily received all the following legends of prodigies, auguries, and prognoſtics, for many ages together, with which Livy has furniſhed his huge hiſtory."

" So the child who is once taught to believe any one occurrence to be a good or evil omen, or any day of the month or week to be lucky or unlucky, hath a wide inroad made on the foundneſs of his underſtanding in the following judgments of his life; he lies ever open to all the ſilly impreſſions and idle tales of nurſes, and imbibes many a fooliſh ſtory with greedineſs, which he muſt unlearn again if ever he become acquainted with truth and wiſdom."

" I confeſs

"I confeſs where an author ſets up himſelf to ridicule *divine* writers and things ſacred, and yet aſſumes an air of ſovereignty and dictatorſhip, to exalt and almoſt deify all the *Pagan* ancients, and caſt his ſcorn upon all the moderns, eſpecially if they do but favour of miracles and the goſpel, it is fit the admirers of this author ſhould know that *Nature and theſe Ancients are not the ſame*, though ſome writers always unite them. Reaſon and Nature never made theſe ancient *Heathens* their ſtandard, either of art or genius, of writing or heroiſm. Sir Richard Steele in his little eſſay, called The Chriſtian Hero, has ſhewn our Saviour and St. Paul in a more glorious and tranſcendent light, than a Virgil or a Homer could do for their Achilles, Ulyſſes, or Æneas; and I am perſuaded if Moſes and David had not been inſpired writers, theſe very men would have ranked them at leaſt with an Herodotus and Horace, if not given them the ſuperior place."

NOTES.

(t) *PRACTICE of their Gods.* . . Jupiter the ſupreme God of the Heathens, or in other words as they call him "The Father of Gods and Men," though ſet forth by Hiſtorians as the wiſeſt of Princes, is deſcribed by his Worſhippers as infamous for his Vices. He was the offspring of inceſt, and, in the ſtyle of his progenitors, reputed "to live in the rank ſweat of an inceſtuous bed:" when he came into Power, which he attained in defiance of order, and polluted with a parent's Blood, he gave a looſe to all manner of exceſſes. He was a Uſurper, a Tyrant, and a Debauchee, in every ſenſe hoſtile to Virtue. His own Kindred,

Kindred, the neareſt in degree, could not eſcape him who in their turn, Seducers and Proſtitutes, became his rivals and requited him in kind. Some eight or ten crowned Heads are ſaid to have worn on their imperial Frontlets the Inſignia of his amorous Triumphs, and of Meſdemoiſelles Royal ſome twice fifteen, celeſtial and terreſtrial, tricked of their Honour, bore witneſs of his Proweſs. Heaven was crowded with his intriguing Progeny; all in the family way. The Rape of Ganymede was another of his exemplary Exploits. Nor among the reſt of his Divine attributes muſt his cannibaliſm be forgotten. Through a capricio of jealouſy, or ſome extraordinary motives of prudence, (on the Olympic Scheme cauſe and effect do not neceſſarily correſpond) he devoured his firſt wife Metis in her pregnancy, and thence, wonderful to tell, becoming himſelf pregnant, brought forth a bouncing full-grown laſs, "armed at all points exactly cap-a-pee." . . . Pretty legerdemain work this, and quite congenial with the Pagan notions of Heaven! . . . Heaven! confined to the ſummit of a blue Hill. Riſum teneatis? . . .

On another occaſion the fiery ſteeds of the ſun have the reins thrown looſe upon their necks, and the world is left to grope its way in the dark, while their driver, the grand maſter of the Illuminati, with the Rays about his head, like a lord chancellor in his full-bottomed wig, is ſcampering over hedge and ditch after a pettycoat, one Daphne a waterman's daughter, who in the long-run by a pitiful pun (as the faſhion was) ſtands converted into a laurel. Such were the Freaks of the Gods, as Pope ſummarily characterizes them:

Gods changeful, partial, paſſionate, unjuſt,
Whoſe attributes were rage, revenge and luſt.

Inſpect that heap of contradictions and abſurdities the Pantheon, from Jupiter the Bull to the wittol Momus, is there one of them, who to ſerve his turn is not a profligate, a thief, a liar, a drunkard, a buffoon, a cuckold or a cuckold-maker? The ladies of the Olympic Coterie were not a whit leſs frolickſome than their high mightineſſes, the lords. Would any three of the moſt unfortunate nymphs that ever patroled the Strand from nightfal 'till daybreak, expoſe themſelves on Banſtead Downs to a mutton feeder, as three of thoſe right condeſcending Celeſtials are deſcribed to have expoſed themſelves on Mount Ida? and to make it more moving, the Goddeſs of Wiſdom, in puris naturalibus, muſt be of the party. The Goddeſs of Chaſtity herſelf, though not enrolled on this ſpirited occaſion, we find deſcending from her altitudes, and now and then ſolacing herſelf with a nap in the arms of Endymion, upon whom ſhe fathered no leſs than fifty daughters and a ſon, beſides occaſional favours between whiles beſtowed on another woodland cavalier under the inviting

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inviting figure of a Ram; fit companion for the gallant of her Cretan Majeſty, that ſo conſpicuouſly ſhines in Virgil's ſixth Bucolic!

Such ſcenes meretriciouſly wrought up, and diſplayed in all the glare and impoſing colours of Poeſy, are likely to produce bleſſed effects to be ſure. 'Ay! but theſe are all poetical fictions! Ay? but fictions, and miſerable charicatures as they are, it was veritably the Creed of the Day. Boys, who are ſuperficial creatures, look only to the letter, the worſt ſhoots generally ſtriking deepeſt, and the inadequate notions of an over-ruling Power, ſuch puerile, groſs and contemptible traſh is calculated to inſpire, will be indelibly impreſſed, fraught with all its deleterious effects, long ere the latent Myſteries pretended, can decently, if ever to any ſalutary end, be developed. The Greeks and Romans with all their vaunted Intelligence muſt have been miſerable Empirics in Theurgy, to exhibit their fraudulent noſtrums in ſuch contaminated and ſuſpicious vehicles . . It was obſerved by a Gentleman converſing on the ſubject, "If we would have the Learning of the Ancients, we muſt risk the contagion of the vices of the Ancients. And, rejoined another, without prejudice it may be asked, Is there a Vice conceivable under Heaven they do not teach?" a conſolatory hearing for a ſenſible and diſcreet Parent anxious for the welfare and happineſs of his offspring . . . Are there not bad books in Engliſh? no doubt there are bad books in Engliſh; what then? They are not indiſcriminately cried up as ſyſtems of morality; they are not adopted in our ſchools.

(2) It is a queſtion if this Eclogue [III.] in point of morality be not, to all intents and purpoſes, as ill featured as the ſecond; great pains have been taken to obviate and explain away the objections to the Alexis; but by what powers of ratiocination ſhall we get rid of, "meus ignis Amyntas"? Two poetical Shepherds contend in alternate ſtrains, as ſtill cuſtomary with the Improviſatori in Tuſcany eſpecially; Damœtas, like moſt of his Mantuan compeers, a volatile inconſtant Swain, takes occaſion to deſcant on the ſubject of his amours; his opponent Menalcas, a ſomewhat more ſober and perſevering Genius, anſwers, as the law of conteſt requires, conſonantly to the tenour of the former. The ſtriking contraſt between the objects of purſuit conſtitutes a difference that by no conſtruction in modern uſage can be reconciled or miſtaken. . . .

(3) In the eight Eclogue, we alſo find two Shepherds, Damon and Alpheſibœus, contending or amuſing themſelves in Song. The Critics tell us, that one of them, Alpheſibœus, perſonates an Enchantreſs, a convenient Salvo; but of that we are to learn; Hiſtory throws no light upon the ſubject, and the context affords no clue to the diſcovery.

In

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NOTES.

In the ſecond Idyllium of Theocritus, of which this is in part an imitation, Simæthea, an injured female, has recourſe to magic in vindication of her wrongs, of which ſhe gives an affecting detail; and the whole without mixture or confuſion of intereſts is confined to the individual. The Latin is a divided buſineſs; the Dramatis Perſonæ both of the hardier ſex; in both reſpects a deviation from the original, which can hardly be ſuppoſed unintentional: Virgil is not accuſed of ſpeaking to no purpoſe. Damon's Song turns upon an affair of jealouſy: Niſa, a rural coquette, is repreſented as having jilted her Swain; Damon on his part, runs out into bitter invectives, and it is agreed, nem. con. the affair is entirely his own. Damon ſpeaks all along for himſelf in the firſt perſon; in like manner throughout the reſpondent Alpheſibœus, and not as purveyor, repreſentative or proxy of another. His ſtrain is uſhered in and emphatically marked to notice by the ſolemnity of a previous invocation. There is no Enchantreſs directly or indirectly concerned, alluded to or implied; the circumſtance of Daphnis, a male creature, is clearly of a piece with the picture given of the times, and from that of Amaryllis, a ſervant maid, having, as in other inſtances, charge of matters within doors, a beldam behind the curtain is not neceſſarily inferred. Singer and Conjurer, ſo far as the illuſion goes, are manifeſtly one and the ſame, and the whole, for aught that to the contrary appears, has relation merely to his own vile and abominable practices, agreeable to his character intimated in another place. "Saltantes Satyros imitabitur Alpheſibœus." Ecl. 5. l. 73. The Satyrs, "Laſcivi Satyri," called alſo in advanced years, Sileni and Incubi, were a ſort of Demigods, notorious for their beſtial Incontinence. Silenus, in the ſixth Eclogue, the diſguſting quinteſſence and chief of the obſcene crew, a Deity forſooth, "in antro jacentem," like a ſwine in his ſtye, is caught wallowing in the effects of laſt night's debauch. Chromis and Mnaſylus, two of his ſtraggling kinſmen, (may be a little mellow or ſo) opportunely coming upon him "Inflatum heſterno venas, ut ſemper, Iaccho," bind him (a God!) neck and heels, and inſiſt upon his promiſe of a ſong. The nymph Ægle, likewiſe of the order of Half-Deities, a firſt-rate toaſt, juſt in the nick drops unexpectedly upon them, and officiouſly lending a hand coquettes it to the life. Father Silenus, half raiſing his drowſy eyelids, recognifes the wanton young ſparks, and joining in the laugh, bids them looſe him and the ſong is at their ſervice. "Carmina vobis" quoth the muzzy old goat, tipping them the wink. In the interim to pacify Miſs, ſuſpecting her, it ſeems, to have other crotchets in her head, and no great paſſion for ſinging, he gallantly adds, "Huic aliud Mercedis erit;" . . in Dryden's expreſſive language, "The nymph ſhall be rewarded in her way." A pretty modeſt hint for a cavalier of his occupation, and pretty comprehenſive withal; at once letting us into the young Flirt's character, which

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which indeed might be partly guessed from her company, (a) and giving us to understand that he, his elevated reverence, had his wits about him, and still a colt's tooth in his head; or perhaps he thought the insensibility of the white Bull, which engrosses more than a due portion of his song, might be too much for her delicate nerves. Figures, mere figures of speech, Mynheer Van Critic tells you; the whole in the genuine spirit of pastoral simplicity, purely allegorical, upon the sublime principles of the Epicurean system, which it beautifully illustrates: what your literal and vulgar dunces (misled by appearances) might construe sheer drunkenness, is to be taken in a mystical sense, and means inspiration. Bravo! old Square Toes! cries my young master in his cups, realizing the figure; just the thing, "for Wine inspires us and fires us," when off he reels in

(a) The two frolicksome Genii, principal actors in the farce, are described as in habits of intimacy with the jolly old minstrel, whom as Beings of his own order, differing only in years, he jocularly calls "Pueri" [boys or lads.] The accomplished Ægle too, who takes so active a part with them, and cuts so pretty a figure in the groupe, is above the rank of mere mortals. Clearly then, from whatever source the poet derived his materials, upon the principle of analogy, those with whom a nymph of her distinction mixes with such easy familiarity, must be supposed of suitable condition, satyrs at least, and not as some will needs have them, shepherds of inferior degree. Their timidity when they caught the old soaker napping proves nothing to the contrary. Divinities of their stamp, with no small portion of human alloy in their composition, would be apt enough to betray symptoms of dastardliness, like their fellow raps of mere mortal coinage, however they strive to brazen it out, when tempted to try experiments on their superiors. At all events what business had Mademoiselle Ægle, "Ægle Naidum pulcherrima," to thrust herself into such an awkward situation. Of the goatish fraternity she could not be ignorant "that it was dangerous even in open daylight for any of womankind to fall in their way," and caves at best are not the most hallowed asylums for beauty. Witness the congress of Infelix Dido and pius Æneas: yet this by the way however irreconcileable to the common notions of the practice of piety, like many other sinister exploits on the heroic list, is resolved into the will of the Gods, who are represented in a base conspiracy to ruin an innocent and deserving woman. Mother Venus turns Abigail on the occasion, and in the true spirit of her vocation proves a notable slapper. The Father of the Gods connives at it, and the beloved spouse of Jove, in the character of procuress, not to use a more vulgar term, it must be owned, acquits herself to a miracle. All this to compliment the Romans and account for their enmity to the Carthagenians, who certainly by every circumstance of the relation had the most reason to complain of their hypocritical guest, and hold in detestation the perfidious Romans, his pretended descendants.

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in quest of an Ægle, commodiously associated in the train of Bacchus," another of the worthipful corps of Celestials. Precious Examples for youth. . . And these are the delicate and instructive fictions of your Greeks and Romans; and these are the Writers set in competition with Moses and the Prophets!!!

(4) *A Mermaid*, p. 232. . . Nerean Galatea, or Galatea sprung from Nereus, a Sea God. Ecl. vii. l. 37, Neriné Galatea. "Here as in the third Eclogue," observes one of our most elaborate annotators on the Bucolics, "the Shepherds pass immediately from the Invocation of their Deities to the mention of their Loves." Sweet Loves truly! Amyntas, (another Alexis or second Ganymede) being one. No objection on that score, for special Reasons, is applicable to Neriné Galatea; the same Galatea, mentioned Ecl. ix. l. 39. Mythologic Daughter of Nereus and Doris; the attributes in both are descriptively similar; similar in both cases is the mode of compellation, Ecl. vii. "Neriné Galatea——venito." Ecl. ix. "Hue ades, O Galatea." In the former as in the latter Instance, a creature of the Imagination without interest in the heart, episodically introduced to diversify the strain, and a second time brought forward to remove any impression of her being a real mistress, which might hurt the tender feelings of "formosus Alexis." It has been by the apologists of this admired writer sagaciously observed that pius, [anglicé pious] is a favourite Epithet of his; but it is no where to be met with in the Pastorals; the application of it in the commencement of the beautiful Episode of Nisus and Euryalus Æn. v. l. 296." Nisus, amore pio pueri," is the more remarkable. Amor has not uncommonly with the Poets a vicious acceptation; it was the more necessary in particular cases to mark its designation; here then by "Amore pio" is to be understood legitimate affection, as that of a parent for a child, in contradistinction to that spurious Amor, the offspring of Erebus and Nox, with which his earlier productions are manifestly sullied and disgraced. It is that Amor pius, that sacred Friendship, the theme of all succeeding ages, which prompted the heroic youths to lay down their lives for each other, that stamps their affecting story with sterling distinction. It is also worthy of remark, Nisus and Euryalus were Trojans, born in Troy; not emasculated Romans, in degenerate Mantua or Rome.

(5) Sodom and Gomorrah, two neighbouring cities of the Pentapolis, in several marked particulars eventually prototypes of Mantua and Cremona, as Poets and their commentators usually characterize them. "Mantua, væ miseræ nimium vicina Cremonæ!" whatever was the fate of the latter, the two former, we know, *wrily had their reward*. Those who supercilliously controvert other authority may consult Josephus de Bello, l. 5. c. 5. Strabo Geograph. l. 15. and several other writers of note, who examined with their own eyes the still remaining evidences of the flagrant catastrophe of those polluted cities.

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ELEGIES

AND

OTHER POEMS,

CHIEFLY FROM

THE SHAMROCK;

WITH

CORRECTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS FROM
THE AUTHOR'S OWN MANUSCRIPT.

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EDITOR'S ADVERTISEMENT.

IN the Preface to the volume of WHYTE's POEMS lately publiſhed, having occaſion to make mention of the SHAMROCK, I was led to obſerve that ſeveral poems from that collection, had repeatedly appeared without acknowlegement, ſome attributed to writers perfectly innocent of the fact, ſome anonymous, and for the greater part incorrectly copied, in different collections of a ſimilar kind printed in London. The Author wrote to ſome of the publiſhers on the ſubject, and at the ſame time was at the trouble of furniſhing them ſeverally with liſts of errata and amendments, which they aſſured him ſhould be carefully attended to in the future impreſſions. Their promiſes, though under their hands, were however forgotten; the poems have ſince been republiſhed pretty much in the ſame ſtate, and derived little or no advantage from his remonſtrances. Such being the caſe, and the SHAMROCK now out of print, the Editor had it in contemplation, to give a new impreſſion, including of courſe, thoſe detached pieces, with corrections

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and improvements in a more convenient form, to which, independent of more immediate conſiderations, the rapid ſale of the two former impreſſions was a powerful inducement; but the deſign, of which the following is purely a ſpecimen, is for the preſent laid aſide. Unhappily we are fallen on evil days and evil times, as Milton had to lament on a former occaſion, by no means propitious to the Muſes.

JUNE 14, 1801.

*The firſt impreſſion of the SHAMROCK, or *Hibernian Creſſes*, conſiſted of fifteen hundred copies, medium quarto; the other of five hundred copies, royal quarto.

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ELEGY I.*

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1731.

FAR from the buſy cares of life,
In yonder vale O let me ſtray;
And there, retir'd from crowds, and ſtrife,
To ſweet oblivion give the day!

Or, let me hie to where the vine
In wanton wreaths compleats the bower;
There ſee the pearly dew-drops ſhine,
And hang in tears on every flower.

As o'er the green corn-field he flies,
I'll hear the lark's enraptur'd lay;
See morn's firſt bluſhes gild the ſkies;
And hail the ſun's ambroſial ray.

Ye winds, be ſilent, while the raiſ
With pleaſing ſounds the hour prolongs;
The thruſh, too, chaunts his amorous tale,
And pours his little ſoul in ſongs.

Now,

* The ſcene of this little Poem is ſuppoſed to lie on the banks of the *Boyne*, in view of the obeliſk, erected in the year 1736, in memory of the victory gained by king WILLIAM III. over *James* II. near that place, *July* the 1ſt, 1690.

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Now, let my curious eye ſurvey
  Yon monument of deathleſs fame,
That ſhall to every age convey
  Immortal WILLIAM's glorious name.

The *Boyne*'s clear ſtream, that flows faſt by,
  The fields, the groves array'd in green,
The diſtant hills, that prop the ſky,
  Compleat the beauties of the ſcene.

Sweet proſpect to a mind at eaſe,
  That never felt the ſting of care;
The happy ſunſhine of whoſe days
  Was never clouded by deſpair.

Not even ſweet morn's ambroſial ray
  Brings aught of joy to make me bleſt;
To drive one anxious thought away;
  Or chaſe HER image from my breaſt:

Vain are the lark's, the thruſh's ſtrains,
  (Sweet balm of pain, of care, and ſtrife)
Fix'd in my ſoul HER form remains,
  And pulls the very ſtrings of life.

Can that be SHE, that ſtrikes my eye,
  Slow walking o'er yon flowery mead?
Swift o'er the unbending corn I'll fly,
  Nor cruſh the cowſlip's velvet head—

'Tis nothing all, but empty air—
  When wilt thou ceaſe, thou tyrant boy?—
To plunge us deeper in deſpair,
  You cheat us with the hope of joy.

I'll

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I'll hope no more—Deceiver, go—
Thee, and thy treacherous ſmiles I curſe;
For he whoſe lot is caſt ſo low
Is ſure it never can be worſe.

ELEGY II.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1756.

THE winds are huſh'd,—and now no buſy ſound
Is heard along the ſable-ſhrouded plains,
No foot beats hollow o'er the vaulted ground,
But through the world a penſive ſtillneſs reigns;

Loſt all the noiſe and hurry of the day,
A death-like ſilence in the ſtead remains;
Save that the nightingale, from yonder ſpray,
Pours o'er the vale her ſadly-pleaſing ſtrains:

Save that, from out the ivy-wreathed tower,
The hoarſe owl wings her ſolitary flight,
And, ſhelter'd in the gloom of yonder bower,
Tolls the ſlow knell of melancholy night:

Save that the beaſts, which graze on yon blue hill,
Anſwer each other, ſolemn, ſad and ſlow;
Save the hoarſe chiding of the neighbour mill,
And the rough cadence of the ſtream below.

The

The moon, fair regent of the ſilver night,
With all the ſtarry glories in her train,
Wide o'er the earth extends her peerleſs light,
And ſpreads her lucid mantle to the main.

Loſt in the effulgence of reflected day,
Through heaven's pure azure not a cloud is ſeen;
The trees all glitter in the dancing ray,
And dapper elves trip lightly o'er the green.

Sleep o'er the world her drowzy poppies ſtrews,
And univerſal Nature owns her ſway;
The village hind, diſſolv'd in ſoft repoſe,
Forgets the labours, and the cares of day.

All Nature reſts—but I no reſt can know;
For *Sleep* abhors the manſions of *Deſpair*;
" Swift on her downy pinions flies from woe,
" And lights on lids unſullied with a tear."

To-morrow's dawn tears all my joys away;
To-morrow's dawn ELIZA muſt depart:—
Yet, *Reaſon*, yet a little, hold thy ſway,
Swell not my eye, O burſt not yet my heart!

Think not to cheat me now, as oft before,
With the vain hope that I may yet be bleſt:—
O no—I never can be cheated more,
Nor ever more can my torn ſoul have reſt!

Through time's dark womb no diſtant joy I ſee—
No ray of hope breaks through the cloud of care—
No hours of bliſs are there reſerv'd for me—
" 'Tis fix'd—'tis paſt—'tis abſolute deſpair!"

O pain

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O pain to think!—ſo generous, and ſo kind,
Joy of each eye, and every heart's deſire,
The gentleſt manners, and the nobleſt mind,
All female ſoftneſs, and all manly fire—

Yet ſhe is loſt!—What now can grateful prove?
All-gracious heaven, what equal can be found?
No other fair can match my widow'd love—
Eden is loſt—the reſt is common ground.

Riſe, riſe, ye winds! Blow, blow, thou ſurly eaſt!
To the loud blaſt let the wide foreſt roar!
Let the ſea ſwell, and frown a horrid waſte!
And the big waves burſt dreadful on the ſhore!

What have I ſaid?—Alas! had I my will,
Each ruder motion of the waves ſhould ceaſe;
The ſtorm ſhould reſt, each ſurly wind be ſtill;
And every heart, if poſſible, be peace.

Ye guardian powers (if any powers there are
Whoſe watchful eye o'erſees the good and fair)
Protect her ſtill! O guard her from afar!
O make ELIZA your peculiar care!

If ſoft-ey'd innocence, devoid of art,
If modeſty can pleaſe, if beauty charm,
If loveliеſt manners can engage the heart,
If worth demand your care, if virtue warm,

O guard from all the dangers of the ſeas
The richeſt freight that ever veſſel bore!
Let each loud wind ſoft ſink into a breeze,
And bid the thunder of the ſtorm be o'er!

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Loft to all joy, though nought to me remains,
But melancholy, frenzy, and defpair;
Though, like a tender flower o'ercharg'd with rains,
My heart bends low beneath a weight of care;

Still be thou blefs'd with all that heaven can fend,
'Till wearied Nature fhall her charge refign!
Lov'd in thy life, lamented in thy end,
Truth's fair reward, and virtue's prize be thine!

My prayer is heard: but, foft!—what gleam of light
Gilds yon dun tower, and dapples all the eaft?—
To the gray dawn, all hail!—Farewell, to night!
Here, not my forrow, but my muſe muſt reſt.

ELEGY III.*

'TIS night, dead night; and o'er the plain
Darkneſs extends her ebon ray,
While wide along the gloomy ſcene
Deep ſilence holds her ſolemn ſway:

Throughout

* This and the following Elegy the ingenious compiler of Elegant Extracts has introduced in his poetical volume, (London, edit. 1790, pp. 316, 17, 18) under the title of "Two Love Elegies" *by* ——; and are the only pieces of that deſcription contained in that valuable compilation. ... In the index to another edition of that volume after ſome extracts from the poems of Cowper, we find theſe Elegies alſo mentioned, and I preſume by a typographical blunder marked *ib.* this ſhould have been corrected; the Elegies were written and in print before that admired poet was in being.

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Throughout the earth no cheerful beam
The melancholic eye ſurveys,
Save where the worm's fantaſtic gleam
The 'nighted traveller betrays:

The ſavage race (ſo heaven decrees)
No longer through the foreſt rove;
All Nature reſts, and not a breeze
Diſturbs the ſtillneſs of the grove.

All Nature reſts: in ſleep's ſoft arms
The village ſwain forgets his care;
Sleep, that the ſting of ſorrow charms,
And heals all ſadneſs, but deſpair:

Deſpair, alone, her power denies;
And, when the ſun withdraws his rays,
To the wild beach, diſtracted, flies,
Or, cheerleſs, through the deſert ſtrays:

Or, to the church-yard's horrors led,
While fearful echoes burſt around,
On ſome cold ſtone he leans his head,
Or throws his body on the ground.

To ſome ſuch drear and ſolemn ſcene,
Some friendly power direct my way,
Where pale misfortune's haggard train,
Sad luxury! delight to ſtray:

Wrapp'd in the ſolitary gloom,
Retir'd from life's fantaſtic crew,
Reſign'd, I'll wait my final doom,
And bid the buſy world adieu.

The

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The world has, now, no joy for me;
Nor can life now one pleaſure boaſt;
Since all my eyes deſir'd to ſee,
My wiſh, my hope, my all, is loſt;

Since SHE, ſo form'd to pleaſe, and bleſt,
So wiſe, ſo innocent, ſo fair,
Whoſe converſe ſweet made ſorrow leſs,
And brighten'd all the gloom of care,

Since SHE is loſt:—Ye powers divine!
What have I done, or thought, or ſaid?
O ſay! what horrid act of mine,
Has drawn this vengeance on my head?

Why ſhould heaven favour *Lycon's* claim?
Why are my heart's beſt wiſhes croſt?
What fairer deeds adorn his name?
What nobler merit can he boaſt?

What higher worth in him was found,
My true heart's ſervice to outweigh?
A ſenſeleſs fop!—a dull compound
Of ſcarcely animated clay!

He dreſs'd indeed, he danc'd with eaſe,
And charm'd her, by repeating o'er
Unmeaning raptures in her praiſe,
That twenty fools had ſaid before:

But I, alas! who thought all art
My paſſion's force would meanly prove,
Could only boaſt an honeſt heart,
And claim'd no merit but my love.

Have

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Have I not ſate—Ye conſcious hours,
Be witneſs—while my DAPHNE ſung,
From morn to eve, with all my powers
Rapt in the enchantment of her tongue!

Ye conſcious hours, that ſaw me ſtand,
Entranc'd in wonder, and ſurpriſe,
In ſilent rapture preſs her hand,
With paſſion burſting from my eyes.

Have I not lov'd?—O earth, and heaven!
Where, now, is all my youthful boaſt?
The dear exchange I hop'd was given
For ſlighted fame, and fortune loſt!

Where, now, the joys that once were mine?
Where all my hopes of future bliſs?
Muſt I thoſe joys, thoſe hopes reſign?
Is all her friendſhip come to this?

Muſt then each woman faithleſs prove;
And each fond lover be undone?
Are vows no more!—almighty LOVE!
The ſad remembrance let me ſhun!

It will not be—my honeſt heart
The dear, ſad image ſtill retains;
And, ſpite of reaſon, ſpite of art,
The dreadful memory remains.

Ye powers divine, whoſe wonderous ſkill
Deep in the womb of time can ſee,
Behold, I bend me to your will,
Nor dare arraign your high decree!

Let

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Let her be bleſs'd with health, with eaſe,
With all your bounty has in ſtore;
Let ſorrow cloud my future days,
Be DAPHNE bleſs'd!—I aſk no more.

But lo! where, high in yonder eaſt,
The ſtar of morning mounts apace!
Hence let me fly the unwelcome gueſt,
And bid the muſe's labour ceaſe.

ELEGY IV.

WHEN, young, life's journey I began,
The glittering proſpect charm'd my eyes,
I ſaw along the extended plain
Joy after joy ſucceſſive riſe:

And fame her golden trumpet blew;
And power diſplay'd her gorgeous charms;
And wealth engag'd my wandering view;
And pleaſure woo'd me to her arms:

To each, by turns, my vows I paid,
As folly led me to admire;
While fancy magnifi'd each ſhade,
And hope increas'd each fond deſire.

But, ſoon, I found 'twas all a dream,
And learn'd the fond purſuit to ſhun,
Where few can reach their purpos'd aim,
And thouſands daily are undone:

And

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And fame, I found, was empty air;
And wealth had terror for her gueſt;
And pleaſure's path was ſtrewn with care;
And power was vanity at beſt.

Tir'd of the chace, I gave it o'er;
And, in a far ſequeſter'd ſhade,
To contemplation's ſober power
My youth's next ſervices I paid.

There health and peace adorn'd the ſcene;
And oft, indulgent to my prayer,
With mirthful eye, and frolic mien,
The muſe would deign to viſit there:

There would ſhe oft, delighted, rove
The flower-enamell'd vale along;
Or wander with me through the grove,
And liſten to the wood-lark's ſong;

Or 'mid the foreſt's awful gloom,
Whilſt wild amazement fill'd my eyes,
Recall paſt ages from the tomb,
And bid ideal worlds ariſe.

Thus in the muſe's favour bleſt,
One wiſh alone my ſoul could frame,
And heaven beſtow'd, to crown the reſt,
A friend, and *Thyrſis* was his name.

For manly conſtancy, and truth,
And worth, unconſcious of a ſtain,
He bloom'd, the flower of *Britain*'s youth,
The boaſt and wonder of the plain.

Still,

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Still with our years our friendſhip grew;
No cares did then my peace deſtroy;
Time brought new bleſſings as he flew,
And every hour was wing'd with joy:

But ſoon the bliſsful ſcene was loſt;
Soon did the ſad reverſe appear;
Love came, like an untimely froſt,
To blaſt the promiſe of my year.

I ſaw young Daphne's angel-form,
(Fool that I was, I bleſs'd the ſmart)
And, while I gaz'd, nor thought of harm,
The dear infection ſeiz'd my heart:

She was—at leaſt in *Damon*'s eyes—
Made up of lovelineſs, and grace;
Her heart a ſtranger to diſguiſe;
Her mind as perfect as her face:

To hear her ſpeak, to ſee her move,
(Unhappy I, alas! the while)
Her voice was joy, her look was love,
And heaven was open in her ſmile!

She heard me breathe my amorous prayers,
She liſten'd to the tender ſtrain,
She heard my ſighs, ſhe ſaw my tears,
And ſeem'd, at length, to ſhare my pain;

She ſaid ſhe lov'd—and I, poor youth!
(How ſoon, alas! can hope perſuade!)
Thought all ſhe ſaid no more than truth,
And all my love was well repaid.

In

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In joys unknown to courts or kings,
With her I ſate the live-long day,
And ſaid, and look'd ſuch tender things,
As none beſide could look or ſay!

How ſoon can fortune ſhift the ſcene,
And all our earthly bliſs deſtroy!—
Care hovers round, and grief's fell train
Still treads upon the heels of joy.

My age's hope, my youth's beſt boaſt,
My ſoul's chief bleſſing, and my pride,
In one ſad moment all were loſt;
And DAPHNE chang'd; and THYRSIS died.

O! who, that heard her vows ere-while,
Could dream thoſe vows were inſincere?
Or, who could think, that ſaw her ſmile,
Deceit could find admittance there?

Yet, ſhe was falſe!—My heart will break!
Her frauds, her perjuries were ſuch—
Some other tongue than mine muſt ſpeak;
I have not power to ſay how much!

Ye ſwains, hence warn'd, avoid the bait;
O ſhun her paths! the traitreſs ſhun!
Her voice is death, her ſmile is fate,
Who hears, or ſees her, is undone.

And, when death's hand ſhall cloſe my eye,
(For ſoon, I know, the day will come)
O! chear my ſpirit with a ſigh;
And grave theſe lines upon my tomb.

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THE

EPITAPH.

CONSIGN'D to duſt, beneath this ſtone,
In manhood's prime, is DAMON laid;
Joyleſs he liv'd, and died unknown
In bleak misfortune's barren ſhade.

Lov'd by the muſe, but lov'd in vain—
'Twas beauty drew his ruin on;
He ſaw young DAPHNE on the plain;
He lov'd, believ'd, and was undone:

His heart then ſunk beneath the ſtorm,
(Sad meed of unexampled truth)
And ſorrow, like an envious worm,
Devour'd the bloſſom of his youth.

Beneath this ſtone the youth is laid—
O greet his aſhes with a tear!
May heaven with bleſſings crown his ſhade,
And grant that peace he wanted here!

STANZAS.

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STANZAS,

TO ——————,

WITH THE FOREGOING ELEGIES.

SINCE you permit the lowly muſe
This offering at your feet to lay,
Her flight with ardour ſhe renews,
Nor heeds the perils of the way:

If, in the poet's artleſs lays,
Late warbled in his native grove,
You find, perchance, one line to praiſe,
Or ſhould one ſentiment approve;

Let critics babble o'er and o'er,
Of figures falſe, and accent wrong;
Bleſt in THY ſmile, he aſks no more—
There *muſt* be merit in the ſong.

But, when of *epitaph*, and *worm*,
Of *death*, and *tombs*, the bard doth rave,
You'll aſk, how 'ſcap'd he from the ſtorm?
What power hath ſnatch'd him from the grave?

The muſe the ſecret will impart;
For what avails it to diſguiſe?
A ſpeck he ſaw in DAPHNE's heart,
That dimm'd the luſtre of her eyes.

But had the maid THY power poſſeſs'd,
To bind and ſtrengthen beauty's charm;
The virtues glowing in THY breaſt;
The graces breathing in THY form;

Of

Of manners gentle, and ſincere,
Had DAPHNE been what CLARA is,
And had misfortune's ſtroke ſevere
Then robb'd him of the promis'd bliſs,

Too big for words, the deep diſtreſs
Had quickly ſtopp'd the poet's tongue:
O'er-borne by paſſion's wild exceſs,
His heart had ſunk, unwept, unſung.

The youth, too ſure, had *died unknown*;
No lover's ſigh his ſhade had bleſs'd;
No rude memorial on his ſtone
Had mark'd his aſhes from the reſt.

Unleſs perchance, with one kind tear,
The pitying maid his fate ſhould mourn,
And bid ſome happier ſervant's care
To throw a laurel on his urn.

ELEGY V.

TO DAMON.

NO longer hope, fond youth, to hide thy pain,
No longer bluſh the ſecret to impart;
Too well I know what broken murmurs mean,
And ſighs that burſt half-ſtifled from the heart.

Nor did I learn this ſkill by *Ovid*'s rule;
The magic arts are to thy friend unknown:
I never ſtudy'd but in *Myra*'s ſchool,
And only judge thy paſſion by my own.

Believe

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Believe me, LOVE is jealous of his power;
Confeſs betimes the influence of the god;
The ſtubborn feel new torments every hour;
To merit mercy we muſt kiſs the rod.

In vain, alas! you ſeek the lonely grove,
And in ſad numbers to the *Thames* complain;
The ſhade, with kindred ſoftneſs, ſooths thy love;
Sad numbers ſooth, but cannot cure thy pain.

When *Phœbus* felt (as ſtory ſings) the ſmart,
By the coy beauties of his *Daphne* fir'd,
Not *Phœbus* ſelf could profit by his art,
Though all the Nine the ſacred lay inſpir'd.

Even ſhould the maid vouchſafe to hear thy ſong,
No tender feelings will its ſorrows raiſe;
For, verſe hath mourn'd *imagin'd* woes ſo long,
She'll hear unmov'd, and, without pitying, praiſe.

Nor yet, proud maid, ſhould'ſt thou refuſe thine ear;
Nor are the manners of the poet rude;
Nor pours he not the ſympathetic tear,
His heart by anguiſh, not his own, ſubdu'd.

When faireſt names in long oblivion rot,
(For faireſt names muſt yield to waſting time)
The poet's miſtreſs 'ſcapes the common lot,
And blooms uninjur'd in his living rhyme.

ELEGY

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ELEGY VI.

IN ANSWER TO THE FOREGOING.

THOU, whom long ſince I number'd for my own,
To whoſe kind view, in life's firſt happy days,
Each young ambition of my heart was known,
For fame my ardour, and my love of eaſe.

Say, wilt thou pardon, that a while I thought
(The thought how vain!) my feelings to diſguiſe?
Too well thou knew'ſt, by *Myra*'s leſſons taught,
The ſoul's ſoft language, and the voice of eyes:

Thou knew'ſt, perhaps, ere to myſelf 'twas known,
The impatient ſtruggling of the ſigh ſuppreſt;
And early ſaw'ſt, inſtructed by thy own,
The infant paſſion kindling in my breaſt.

No longer, then I'll ſeek to hide my pain,
No longer bluſh the ſecret to impart;
The maſk, which wrong'd thy friendſhip, I diſdain;
"And boaſt the graceful weakneſs of my heart."

Nor ſhall the jealous god with hand ſevere
Afflict his vaſſal, though a rebel long;
Already hath he breath'd the humble prayer,
And pour'd already the repentant ſong.*

But, ah! in vain his art the poet tries,
The power of numbers he exerts in vain;
The maid regards them with unconſcious eyes,
And hears, but *will* not underſtand, the ſtrain.

Yet

* *Repentant ſong.* See Reaſon's Triumph, and the Recantation, two poems poſth. pp. 274, 5, 6, 7. The former of which is glanced at in the third ſtanza of the foregoing Elegy.

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Yet hath ſhe ſeen, for nothing could conceal,
The wild emotions of his labouring breaſt:
The fond attention that devour'd her tale;
The hand that trembled, when her hand it preſt:

While his pleas'd ear upon her accents hung,
Oft hath ſhe mark'd the involuntary ſigh,
Love's broken murmurs forming on his tongue,
And love's warm rapture ſtarting to his eye.

And ſhe hath ſeen him whelm'd in bittereſt woe,
When her frown ſpoke ſome error unforgiven;
And ſhe hath ſeen each kindling feature glow,
When her ſmile chear'd him with a gleam of heaven.

But when in verſe he breathes his amorous care,
(As if *ſhe* knew not what to all is known)
His art ſhe praiſes, but neglects his prayer,
Nor deems the poet, or the verſe, her own.

Say then, O ſay (for ſure *thou* know'ſt full well
Each tender thought with happieſt ſkill to dreſs)
His heart's ſtrong feelings how his tongue ſhall tell!
How ſpeak—what language never can expreſs!

Teach him thoſe arts that did *thy* ſuit commend,
When love firſt prompted MYRA to be kind;
And that thoſe arts may proſper, let thy friend
His love's ſoft advocate in MYRA find.

Then, while the happy means *thy* leſſon ſhews,
To win the maid his paſſion to approve,
Then MYRA ſhall recount—for MYRA knows—
What bleſſings are in ſtore for thoſe that love:

MYRA

MYRA ſhall tell her, that from love alone
Flows the pure ſpring of happineſs ſincere;
And love, with power to lovers only known,
Doubles each joy, and leſſens every care:

And each warm tranſport of *her* conſcious heart,
And each fair hope, that doth *her ſtate* attend,
With generous ardour MYRA ſhall impart,
And point *her own example* to her friend:

And if her ſenſe ſhall *Damon*'s claim approve,
And if her candour deem his vows ſincere,
Her tongue ſhall ſpeak the intereſt of his love,
Her gentle eloquence enforce his prayer:

And all that tendereſt pity can ſuggeſt,
And each ſoft argument her thought can find,
MYRA ſhall urge—O! be her pleading bleſt!—
To win her fair companion to be kind:

And when—for friendſhip muſt not paſs them o'er—
She gives the frailties of his youth to fight,
O! may her pencil place—he aſks no more—
Each little merit in the faireſt light!

CLARA, perchance, may learn to love a heart,
(Proud though the boaſt, it is an honeſt pride)
Where nothing ſelfiſh ever claim'd a part;
Which owns no purpoſe it ſhould *wiſh* to hide:

Warm with the love of virtue and mankind,
At others' bliſs where ſocial feelings glow;
And where, when ſorrow wrings the worthy mind,
The tear is ready for another's woe:

This

This praiſe the youth is fond to call his own;
No higher worth he ſeeks, his claim to grace;
His hope he builds upon his love alone,
And his love ſtands on reaſon's ſolid baſe:

No ſudden blaze, the meteor of a day,
Its tranſient ſplendour o'er his heart doth pour;
Kindled at virtue's fire, the ſteady ray
Shall ſhine through life, and gild it's lateſt hour.

If *ſuch* a heart can pleaſe, if *ſuch* a flame
With kindred ardour can inſpire *her* breaſt,
His firſt ambition hath obtain'd its aim—
To heaven and fortune he commits the reſt:

But if, regardleſs of the honeſt prayer,
The maid unpitying on his love ſhould frown;
If fate's worſt ſhock the youth is doom'd to bear,
Each proſpect darken'd, and each hope o'erthrown;

Too humbly fearful of the all-ruling power
To ſtrike the blow that ſets the ſpirit free,
Priſon'd in life, he 'll wait the appointed hour,
And patient bend him to the hard decree:

Yet ne'er (however ſhifts the varying ſcene)
Shall *her* dear image from his mind depart;
Still freſh the lov'd idea ſhall remain,
Warm with each pulſe, and woven with his heart:

Unchang'd through life, ſtill anxious for *her* peace,
For *her* to heaven his daily prayer ſhall riſe;
And, when kind fate ſhall grant the wiſh'd releaſe,
His laſt weak breath ſhall bleſs her as it flies:

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Then, when in earth's cold womb his limbs are laid,
(For ſure her ſervant's fall ſhall reach her ear)
CLARA perchance will ſigh, and grant his ſhade
The kind compaſſion of a pious tear:

Yes, ſhe *will* weep—for gentle is her breaſt—
Though his love pleas'd not, ſhe will mourn his doom;
And, haply, when with flowers his grave is dreſs'd,
Her hand may plant a myrtle o'er his tomb.

This meed, at leaſt, his ſervice may demand;
This—and 'tis all he aſks—his truth may claim:
No breathing marble o'er his duſt ſhall ſtand;
No ſtoried urn ſhall celebrate his name:

Enough for him, that, where his aſhes lie
When kindred ſpirits ſhall at times repair,
The proſperous youth ſhall caſt a pitying eye;
The ſlighted virgin pour her ſorrows there:

Enough for him, that, pointing to his ſtone,
The ſad old man his ſtory ſhall relate,
Then ſmite his breaſt, and wiſh, with many a groan,
No child of his may meet ſo hard a fate.

REASON'S TRIUMPH;

A CANTATA.

RECITATIVE.

BENEATH an aged oak, whoſe verdant head
Stretch'd o'er the vale its venerable ſhade;
Beſide a brook, whoſe boſom, all ſerene,
Reflected back the beauties of the ſcene,

The

The various flowers that on the border grew,
The grove's gay verdure, and the ſky's clear blue,
Young STREPHON lay; STREPHON the blytheſt ſwain
That ever pip'd or danced upon the plain:
Of all *Love*'s votaries, ſince old *Adam*'s fall,
None deeper drank the honey or the gall;
But, freed at length, the chain no more can bind,
Returning REASON opens on his mind,
New proſpects dawn, new hopes his thoughts employ,
And thus he hails the birth-day of his joy.

AIR.

Sweet liberty! celeſtial gueſt!
Welcome—O welcome to my breaſt!
Too long from thence by paſſion driven,
Thou beſt, thou nobleſt gift of heaven!
No more I drag the ſervile chain;
No more I ſigh; no more I mourn;
Fair REASON now reſumes her reign;
And peace and joy again return.

RECITATIVE.

Thus while the ſhepherd ſung, the feather'd throng
Catch the ſoft ſounds, and imitate his ſong;
Fir'd by the theme, on trembling wings they riſe,
And pour a flood of muſic through the ſkies;
All Nature ſmiles; ſweet echo ſwells the voice;
The hills, the fountains, and the groves rejoice;
When thus the youth his ſong begins again,
And pleas'd attention waits upon the ſtrain.

AIR.

Thou tyrant god, with all thy train
Of anxious fears, and waſting pain,

The

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The reſtleſs wiſh, the tear, the ſigh,
And jealouſy with jaundiced eye,
Hence farewell!—My heart is free,
Reſtor'd to peace and liberty.
Now, no more I dread thy power—
At thy ſhrine no more I bow—
Hence begone!—thy reign is o'er—
Tyrant! I defy thee now.

My cares are gone; my ſorrows ceaſe;
My breaſt regains its wonted peace;
And joy, and hope, returning, prove
REASON is too ſtrong for LOVE.

THE RECANTATION,

AN ODE.

BY LOVE too long depriv'd of reſt,
(Fell tyrant of the human breaſt!)
His vaſſal long, and worn with pain,
Indignant, late I ſpurn'd the chain;
In verſe, in proſe, I ſung and ſwore
No charms ſhould e'er enſlave me more,
Nor neck, nor hair, nor lip, nor eye,
Again ſhould force one tender ſigh.

As, taught by heaven's informing power,
From every fruit, and every flower,
That nature opens to the view,
The bee extracts the nectar-dew;

A vagrant

A vagrant thus, and free to change,
From fair to fair I vow'd to range,
And part from each, without regret,
As pleas'd and happy, as I met.

Then freedom's praiſe inſpir'd my tongue,
With freedom's praiſe the vallies rung,
And every night, and every day,
My heart thus pour'd the enraptur'd lay:
'My cares are gone; my ſorrows ceaſe;
'My breaſt regains its wonted peace;
'And joy, and hope, returning, prove
'That reaſon is too ſtrong for LOVE.'

Such was my boaſt—but, ah! how vain!
How ſhort was reaſon's vaunted reign!
The firm reſolve I form'd ere-while
How weak, oppos'd to CLARA's ſmile!
Chang'd is the ſtrain—the vallies round
With freedom's praiſe no more reſound;
But, every night, and every day,
My full heart pours the alter'd lay.

Offended Deity! whoſe power
My rebel tongue but now forſwore,
Accept my penitence ſincere,
My crime forgive, and grant my prayer!
Let not thy ſlave, condemn'd to mourn,
With unrequited paſſion burn;
With love's ſoft thoughts her breaſt inſpire,
And kindle there an equal fire!

It is not beauty's gaudy flower,
(The empty triumph of an hour)

Nor

Nor practis'd wiles of female art,
That now subdue my destin'd heart;
O no!—'tis heaven, whose wondrous hand
A transcript of itself hath plann'd,
And to each outward grace hath join'd
Each lovelier feature of the mind.

These charms shall last, when others fly,
When roses fade, and lilies die;
When that dear eye's declining beam
Its living fire no more shall stream:
Bleft then, and happy in my chain,
The song of freedom flows in vain;
Nor reason's harsh reproof I fear,
For reason's self is passion here.

O dearer far than wealth, or fame!
My daily thought, my nightly dream,
If yet no youth's successful art,
Sweet hope! hath touch'd thy gentle heart;
If yet no swain hath bless'd thy choice,
Indulgent hear thy *Damon*'s voice;
From doubts, from fears, his bosom free;
And bid him live—for LOVE, and THEE.

THE PICTURE.

FRIEND of my youth, these lines receive,
And, ere my passion you reprove,
Let my true hand attempt to give
A PICTURE of the maid I love.

But

But think not in my verſe to view
Such praiſe as verſe too oft beſtows;
A neck, that mocks the lily's hue;
Or cheeks, that ſhame the ſummer roſe:

Though her's be every charm of youth,
On which delighted love can dwell;
Fair though ſhe be—in honeſt truth,
Much fairer than my tongue can tell—

Yet this I paſs in ſilence by;
For many are her rivals there;
And *Kitty* boaſts as bright an eye;
And *Fanny*'s face is full as fair.

Then think not mere exterior form
My heart's fond wiſh could ever win;
To me *expreſſion* is the charm,
Sure herald of a mind within.

Each movement of AMIRA's frame
Calls into life ſome new-born grace;
While her eye's bright, yet temperate beam
Proclaims her heart's internal peace.

To paint her unexampled worth,
What colours can the poet find;
What heavenly tints, to ſhadow forth
The bright perfection of her mind?

The ſoul, in innocence ſecure,
Meet inmate of ſo far a frame?
The manners, artleſs all, and pure,
As the rock'd infant's golden dream?

The

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The brow, where ſenſe with ſweetneſs ſhines?
The look, which wakes, yet checks deſire,
Where dignity with freedom joins,
Where grace, and lovelineſs conſpire!

Weak tho' the tints, unſkill'd the hand,
That rudely ſketch'd th' imperfect plan;
Mark you the features as they ſtand,
And then, condemn me if you can.

TO A YOUNG LADY,

WITH THE FOREGOING.

ASK not, ſweet innocence, what grace
Sate for the PICTURE which I drew:
Each ſkilful eye around can trace
The bright original in YOU.

'The brow, where ſenſe, and ſweetneſs ſhine;
'The look, which wakes, yet checks, deſire;'
The form, the features all are thine;
'Tis your own image you admire.

Unconſcious of her charms, thus *Eve*
Lean'd o'er the margin of the flood;
Beheld a wonder in the wave,
And prais'd the beauty ſhe beſtow'd.

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STANZAS,

TO MISS LATOUCHE,

THE LATE COUNTESS OF LANESBOROUGH,

WITH A VOLUME OF POEMS,

SELECTED

FROM OUR BEST WRITERS, BY THE AUTHOR, HER PRECEPTOR;

ON HER BIRTH-DAY,

TUESDAY, JANUARY XVIITH, MDCCLXXV.

HAIL! dear ELIZA!—hail! the auſpicious day,
Sacred to innocence and ſmiling mirth;—
Strike up the inſtruments, all hearts be gay,
And with due honours grace ELIZA'S BIRTH.
While all around in juſt applauſe combine,
Can I, who beſt ſhould know thee, niggard mine?

That matchleſs elegance and winning grace,
Which mark thy movements thro' the mazy dance;
That perfect ſymmetry of mien and face,
Are merely foils thy merits to enhance:
In the rich temple of thy ample mind
Are all the virtues with good ſenſe inſhrin'd.

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Even on the feſtal hour, lo! I encroach;
Sure proof how well the truth I may atteſt;
For truth to thee at all times ſhall approach,
Not as a ſtranger, but a welcome gueſt;
So by hereditary worth inſpir'd,
In affluence bleſt, unenvied and admir'd.

Could words the dictates of the ſoul impart,
On ſuch a theme the muſe might rapture'd dwell;
But, like thyſelf, ELIZA! void of art,
Theſe ſimple lines my warm affection tell;
While, thy felicity my aim and end,
To thee this votive garland they commend.

To raiſe the genius poets wrote of old,
To mend the heart, and generous views inſpire:
There happieſt portraits here diſplay'd behold,
And let thy ſoul bright emulation fire.
One virtuous action, one well-natur'd deed,
Does all addreſs in poliſh'd arts exceed.

ADVICE

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THE MERCHANT'S TALE.*

"AN affair having occurred in the box-room of the theatre royal, on Monday evening laſt, in conſequence of an unprovoked attack on my perſon; and a malicious miſrepreſentation of that affair having appeared in ſome public papers, I feel myſelf impelled, however reluctantly, to treſpaſs on the public attention, by a ſimple narrative of facts.—I am equally ſtimulated to this by what I conceive a proper reſpect for the rank of a citizen, which, in a political point of view, I do not conſider the object of inſult from any profeſſion, however diſtinguiſhed by the King's commiſſion, ſupported by the people for their PROTECTION, and not for their DESTRUCTION.

"On Monday, the 21ſt of December, I went with two friends to the box-room of the theatre-royal, and paid for my admiſſion; we were ſhown by the box-keeper, into a box, in which were three gentlemen, two of them in regimentals, and three ladies. One of the gentlemen told us, the box was engaged to him and his party, to which he was politely anſwered, that, the moment his company came, we would withdraw, with which he appeared ſatisfied.—Soon after came a third officer, and one of the other gentlemen went out. After ſitting ſome time, the laſt mentioned officer went out; and after the play, my two friends alſo retired to another part of the theatre. The officer ſoon after returned, and ſat himſelf down by me in a manner ſo abrupt as to puſh me backward off the ſeat, which I conceived to be an accident, and therefore did not reſent it, tho' the rudeneſs of the gentleman aſtoniſhed me much, as he did not offer any apology. My two friends returned before the farce began. On entering the box, by accident, the flap of the ſeat fell againſt the officer, for which an immediate apology was offered; which, the officer not regarding, thought proper to ſay, we were troubleſome, and that he did not know what buſineſs we had there—ſharp words enſued—the diſpute however ſubſided, and civility ſeemed to be perfectly reſtored.

"A few minutes before the farce ended, the officer who had been ſo very rude went out:—my friends and I, when the amuſement concluded, were retiring peaceably through the

* By way of Introduction - . . . taken from the Morning Paper.

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box-room.—We there ſaw ſix or ſeven officers ſtanding together;—one of them, pointing to me, ſaid, 'That is he;'—upon which the officer who had diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his rudeneſs in the box, ſeized me by the collar, and, with the moſt abuſive language, threatened to break my bones. One of my friends remonſtrated on the impropriety of ſuch expreſſions, and offered to give him my addreſs, which the other rejected with more ſcurrility of language, and then puſhed the pummel of his ſword with great violence in my eye. A ſcuffle enſued, and I made the beſt defence I was able with a ſtick which I fortunately happened to have in my hand. The other officers joined in the attack, threatening inſtant death, which I have every reaſon to apprehend would have been the conſequence, (FOR THEY DREW THEIR SWORDS) had it not been for the interference of ſome gentlemen preſent, whoſe intrepidity broke into the circle in which they had me encompaſſed, and prevented any fatality which might have been intended.

"I have been moſt unmeritedly traduced, and expreſſions alledged to have been applied by me to the ladies in the box, (of which I truſt I am incapable) which would have diſgraced the meaneſt of mankind; and which, if really uſed, muſt have drawn forth the inſtant reſentment of the two officers, under whoſe immediate protection thoſe ladies were—but theſe gentlemen thought proper not only to ſit ſilent during the altercation in the box, but to take no part in the affray which enſued.

"Of the foregoing facts I have numerous reſpectable witneſſes, many of whom were before total ſtrangers to me.—I am not diſpoſed to enter into newſpaper conteſts, or abuſive recrimination.—This is the firſt and laſt time I ſhall take notice of any anonymous publications; having reſorted to the laws of the country, from which, though a ſtranger (being a citizen of London) I have full confidence in meeting redreſs. I am alſo, proud to ſay, that I am now a citizen of the metropolis of Ireland, and I truſt never to be found ſhrinking from the duties I owe to that character; and I feel that I ſhould wrong the juſtice of my cauſe, if I had not an honeſt confidence in the candour, impartiality, and ſupport of my fellow citizens.

No. 129, Abbey-ſtreet,
Dec. 26, 1789.

"MICHAEL WORTH."

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THE

RECREANT KNIGHTS DISCOMFITED,

AN HEROI-SERIO-COMIC BALLAD,

CONTAINING A FAITHFUL RELATION OF A STRANGE AND TERRIBLE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN NINE GREAT OFFICERS AND A PEACEFUL CITIZEN.*

. . . . . *Nimium ne crede colori.* Virg. Ecl. 2.

GOD proſper long our noble King,
Our lives and ſafeties all!
A woful ſkirmiſh late there did
In SPRANGER'S Booth befall.[1]

No longer be it ſung or ſaid,
Nine taylors make a man,
Since nine ſpruce Cavaliers in red
From one ſmall Merchant ran.

A fray ſo ſtrangely ne'er begun
At opera, play or park,
From Alexander, Philip's ſon,[2]
To Alexander Clarke.

The

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The practice of the Meſs gone through,
And Faulkner's Journal read;
What could our vacant Heroes do,
Until the time of bed?

To lounge the tedious hours they went
At HEXHAM'S mimic fight; [3]
But dearly ſhall they all repent
The paſtime of that night.

Alert they to the boxes crowd,
Of gaudy trappings vain,
And look, full crufty, glum and proud,
On little folks diſdain.

They gabble loud, damn all they ſaw,
And all the houſe diſturb;
For 'gainſt ill-breeding there's no law,
And on their tongues no curb.

A Youth beſide them took his place,
Of ſmall account to ſee,
And, ſooth to ſay, 'twas great diſgrace,
He ſhould ſo near them be.

Him firſt in guarded ſpeech they taunt,
Which courteous he repell'd;
Thence gathering heart they huff and vaunt,
By him with ſmiles beheld.

For

For proweſs high in PLYMOUTH ſtreets
Recorded ſtands their fame,
And eke their thrice renowned feats,
DEE's frighted ſhores proclaim.[4]

Nor ſhall thy meed in OSTMEN's-TOWN,[5]
SLIEVE-BRAZEN, be forgot,
When GEORGE, the hatter, knock'd thee down;
CORK-HILL, the fatal ſpot.

Preſuming like a lordly brave,
Thou didſt thy venom ſpit;
But that could not thy bacon ſave,
Which might have taught thee wit.

FITZMINION too may rue the day
With *Volunteer* at ſtrife,
Who kick'd and cuff'd him on the quay,
For tampering with his wife.

The deeds erewhile of their compeers
I could alike unveil;
But now in pity ſpare their fears;
The time ſupplies my tale. . . . .

The prompter rang, the curtain roſe,
The actors plied their parts:
But nothing could content the Beaux,
For rancour fill'd their hearts.

Eftſoons

Eftſoons they heard the beaten drum,
And, wonderful to ſay!
Anon they felt their courage come;
But miſchief mark'd its way.

SLIEVE-BRAZEN ſightly, large and ſtrong,
BELANNA's dear delight,
And CRUSKEEN-BORB of froward tongue,[6]
But ſtomach ſmall for fight;

With ſeven more, robuſt and tall,
Train'd Warriours from their birth,
Becauſe a ſtranger to them all,
Conſpire to murder WORTH.

For WORTH was the young Merchant's name,
And doubly 'twas his right;
Thoſe recreants prov'd it to their ſhame,
When they provok'd his might.

In vengeful dudgeon forth they ſtroll'd,
And rak'd the box-room fire,
Leſt haply, ſhould their wrath catch cold,
Their valour might expire.

With direful threatenings high in oath,
Each chieftain ſeiz'd his poſt,
And, as becomes the martial cloth,
Each ſeems himſelf a hoſt.

Away,

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Away, away, thou reckleſs 'ſquire!
Away, devoted groom!
Who dares oppoſe them in their ire,
Too ſurely tempts his doom.

Soon Worth appear'd, the hoſtile crew,
A deſperate band, I trow,
With naked ſwords all at him flew,
Reſolv'd to lay him low.

Slieve-Brazen, like a frantic ſcold
Amidſt her brawling crones,
Firſt on his collar laid faſt hold,
And ſwore he'd break his bones.

To give his ſtern bravado weight,
He ſtoutly ſtamp'd the board,
And in his face he bolted ſtraight
The pummel of his ſword.

This was by concert ſignal made
The onſet to begin,
Which on the inſtant all obey'd,
And cloſely hemm'd him in.

Ah! woe is me! there's no reſource,
And here thy days muſt end!
For ſure 'gainſt ſuch united force,
'Twere bootleſs to contend.

With oaken ſtick, ſcarce worth a groat,
He kept them all at bay,
And quickly to confuſion brought
The authors of the fray.

SLIEVE-BRAZEN, . . . thwack! . . . a broken head! . . .
In doleful plight was he!
Sir CRUSKEEN-BORE roar'd out, he's dead!
And crouch'd upon his knee.

The proſtrate leader's hand he took,
Belike to breathe a vein;
But pauſing . . . . ſhot at WORTH a look,
And ſtarted up again.

'Twas then his heart-ſtring Honour pinch'd,
A cord ſhe ſeldom touch'd;
His truſty whinyard never flinch'd,
And firm the hilt he clutch'd.

Yield thee, vile caitiff! fierce he cries,
Or this decides thy fate;
Vain hope!—a chop betwixt his eyes
Conſign'd him to the grate.

His harder hap I needs muſt tell,
Ye courtly blades beware!
The ruthleſs embers on him fell,
And burnt his well-dreſs'd hair!

There

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There lies he as preſumption ſhould;
  Revenge O'Brogus vow'd,
As near his ſmouldring curls he ſtood,
  Wrapt in a ſavoury cloud.

Such ſcreens by hands celeſtial ſpread,
  Might knights of old defend;
But thoſe convenient times are fled,
  No Goddeſs proves his friend.

Ripe from the ſtews the war to wage
  O'Brogus ſought renown;
Doll Pairmain croſs'd him in his rage;
  He knock'd Doll Pairmain down.

Poor Doll ſet up a hideous ſquall!
  O'Brogus was ſo vext!
The Belles made from him, Beaux and all,
  Concluding their turn next.

But ſoon (pot-valiant now no more)
  He wails a ſtreaming ſnout;
As tho' the bumpers quaff'd before
  Deſerted that way out.

Two Blades in buff his place ſupplied,
  And hot the conteſt grew;
The Youth, with juſtice on his ſide,
  Soon cool'd their courage too.

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Beneath a lady's arm entrench'd,
One bravely tilts a poke;
But from his gripe the cheeſe-fork wrench'd,
WORTH with his ſapling broke.

Behind him One, all blanch'd with fear,
Prepares a mortal thruſt;
His left hand timely gain'd his ear,
And fell'd him to the duſt.

With brandiſh'd faulchion, gleaming bright,
Another brav'd the liſt;
Plumb in the mark, as ſwift as light,
WORTH darts his manly fiſt.

Like the chaf'd ſurge he ſtorms his trunk;
Down dropt the guiltleſs ſteel,
And ſickening ſore, like gin-ſwill'd punk,
He to and fro did reel.

On all around, ſtand or retreat,
WORTH dealt with peerleſs ſkill,
And down he laid them at his feet,
Like ſacks upon the mill.

O ſtain to arms! FITZMINION then,
Shock'd at the fight, did ſcream;
Aſſert your place in beauty's ken,
And your loſt fame redeem.

Had

Had BUCKINGHAM not quit the land,
Or WESTMORELAND appear'd,
Accounts againſt you ſo to ſtand,
You muſt be all caſhier'd.*

The words had ſcarce a paſſage found
From out his quivering lips,
When WORTH, to face him wheeling round,
The muſky Major trips.

Oh! I am hurt! he piteous cried!
My friends! be witneſs all!
But what more deeply hurts my pride,
The Merchant ſees me fall.

And many were the lookers on,
Who well his drift might read;
But to redreſs him ran not one,
For all approv'd the deed.

The vanquiſh'd Knights, if 'twould avail,
I could by name record;
But that would little grace my tale;
They had their juſt reward.

Their foul defeat, of all the corps,
Eſcap'd there none to tell;
Save one, who ſculk'd behind the door,
Diſcover'd by the ſmell.

This

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This doughty ſwordſman well, I ween,
Could wield his Knife and Fork;
A fungus, puff'd with pride and ſpleen,
Sprung from the jakes of Cork.

The ſtrife near twenty minutes coſt,
Ere WORTH got time to breathe;
And now in generous pity loſt,
He looks on thoſe beneath.

Tho' match'd againſt ſuch fearful odds,
His life and fame at ſtake;
To ſee them like a heap of clods,
His very heart did ake.

Why would you ſo, with grief he cried,
Expoſe a ſoldier's name?
I almoſt rather would have died,
Than tarniſh you with ſhame.

The Girls on red-coats wont to doat,
Perceiving how they err'd,
Struck with amazement! chang'd their note,
And WORTH, ſweet ſouls! preferr'd.

So home he went with laurels deck'd;
His foes beſtrew'd the field:
Thus Virtue's ſons obtain reſpect,
And courage is their ſhield.

The

The Nine, repriev'd for future fate,
'Gainſt WORTH ſneak'd off to ſwear,[9]
And each diſplay'd his reeking pate,
Which made the Juſtice ſtare!!!

Good lack! good lack! his Worſhip cried,
Thus pride muſt have a fall!
Can honour be to WORTH denied,
That ſingly fac'd you all!

I'll not diſtreſs the brave young Man
With warrants and ſo forth;
Go home, and do the beſt you can
To make it up with WORTH.

God ſave the King and Juſtice too,
And let good ſenſe increaſe,
That dreſs'd in ſcarlet, green or blue,
We may ſee ſhows in peace.

EPIGRAM.

Μέγα βιβλίον, μέγα κακὸν.

GREAT Books, Great Books, Sir! are great evils:
And what are Pamphlets?....Little Devils.

NOTES

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NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

[1] IN SPRANGER'*s Booth*.—The Theatre Royal, Crow-ſtreet, Dublin, built by *Spranger Barry*, Eſq.

[2] *From Alexander, Philip's Son,* } This will queſtionleſs be un-
To Alexander Clarke. } derſtood in a qualified ſenſe, purely as a poetical deſignation of time, to which terms more ſtrictly chronological could not ſo well be appropriated..... *All-legs-under Clarke* was the original Reading; but, though ſupported by claſſical authority, on mature deliberation, the more uſual appellative was preferred; as it obviates miſconſtructions; accords better with its correlative in the preceding verſe, and affords a plauſible preſumption that, where Alexander the Great is of the Party, there can be no reaſonable complaint on the footing of Company. Beſides the appearance of a Pun in ſo ſerious a compoſition, ... an Epic Poem forſooth!.... might juſtly give offence to Readers of a certain deſcription, who mightily value themſelves on verbal preciſion and delicacy of taſte. Philologers of ſuch refinement, to ſpeak of them ſuitably to their genius and talents, have otherguefs notions of the Bagatelle than are recorded of one Swift, 'a very ſhallow fellow,'* whom poſſibly they may have heard of tho' never matriculated in his Academy, where the ARS PUNNANDI, was a favourite ſtudy, and often ſuperſeded Smegleſius, Keckermannus, Burgerſdicius, and indeed the whole phalanx of Logicians, for ages paſt the pride and bulwark of the Schools. He wrote a Book too called the Draper's Letters, a pretty tolerable performance for thoſe days, and, ſave Watſon's Almanack, the moſt popular that ever iſſued from the Iriſh Preſs. To his pen alſo the Critics aſcribe the Hiſtory of the Yahoos, a grave and good ſort of people, bitter enemies to punning, a ſcience in which that author, as all his cotemporaries affirm, was a notable proficient, and not only honoured it in his own practice, but encouraged the exerciſe of it in others, inſomuch that he is ſaid to have made it in ſome degree a point in the ſelection of his aſſociates, and particular intimates at the Deanery; few of whom, if there be faith in Chronicles, were remarkable for obtuſeneſs of underſtanding, or poverty of wit.

The ſame Swift was in other reſpects likewiſe a promoter of arts. He built an Hoſpital, or College rather, for Profeſſors of

* See Sheridan's Life of Dean Swift, 8vo. Lond. 1784, p. 449.

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of a peculiar caſt, and liberally provided for its ſupport by an endowment in perpetuity, out of his own private fortune, which, however inadequate to the urgency of the times, argues no doubt the neceſſity of the Inſtitution and a very laudable ſhare of public ſpirit in the founder. One of his friends, another Alexander, not the copper-ſmith,† has left a celebrated Eſſay behind him, where thoſe whom it may concern, may find the qualifications for admiſſion ſummarily compriſed in a ſingle diſtich.

Some have at firſt for Wits, then Poets paſt,
Turn'd Criticks next, and prov'd plain Fools at laſt.

What a lamentable thing it is, we every where meet with ſuch numbers of promiſing Candidates! . . . The Rooms are full.

[3] *At Hexham's mimic fight.*—The Battle of Hexham, a dramatic Piece by *G. Colman*, Eſq. acted that memorable evening.

[4] Dee's *frighted ſhores.*—The City of Cheſter ſtands on the Banks of the River *Dee*, which incloſes it on the ſouth and weſt.

[5] *Nor ſhall thy meed in* Ostmen's Town.—*Dublin*, ſo called from the *Oſtmen* or Danes, its original inhabitants.

[6] *And* Cruskeen-borb.—*Borb*, in Engliſh, *fierce*; a fine patronymic affix! luckily characteriſing this complicated hero, at once the Ajax and Therſites of the piece.

[7] *Plumb in the mark.*—*Mark*, a technical term in the *Mendozan* ſchool, by which is meant the pit of the ſtomach.

[8] *You muſt be all caſhier'd.*—This Stanza points out the preciſe æra of the tranſaction, which happened during the interregnum that took place, anno 1789, and probably has ſome ſecret reference, as uſual with our author, to collateral occurrences. An aſtoniſhing craſh about the ſame time happened among the minor financiers in the public offices, whoſe extenſive manors, elegant villas, ſuperb palaces, and ſplendid domeſtic arrangements, occaſioned ſurmiſes that all was not fairly come by. Unfortunately our active Chief Governor had a turn for accounts. Their books were called for . . . Many of thoſe provident gentry were diſplaced; ſome embraced voluntary exile, and ſome, it was whiſpered, went ſelf-deveted to the grave. But they were eventually revenged. The agents of peculation beſtirred

† Alluding, it may be ſuppoſed, to one Alexander Woods, notorious for uttering bad Half-pence, a ſpecies of punning not at all in Swift's manner, and as he was in no ſhape an encourager of Raps, amongſt other laudable endeavours to ſuppreſs them, he took occaſion to preach a Sermon from 2 Tim. ch. iv. v. 14, decidedly levelled at Woods.

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beſtirred themſelves; popular clamour was wrought upon: His numerical Excellency was recalled, and that very Viceroy, who but a few months before, on his arrival at the ſeat of Government, ſaw the windows in every quarter illuminated, and had his carriage drawn in triumph thro' the ſtreets, with the horſes taken off, by the crowding populace amidſt univerſal acclamations, was obliged to ſteal off at a back-door, and make the beſt of his way thro' bye-lanes and alleys to ſcreen himſelf from outrage ... One of the defaulters, whoſe appointment did not exceed 60l. annually, on being declared bankrupt, had claims proved againſt him by private individuals to the amount of one hundred and ſixty three thouſand pounds ....163,000l. !!!.... *ex pede Herculem*. ... Who after ſuch a ſpecimen can liſten to grumblers making poor mouths, or tax the good people of Dublin with incredulity?!

9 '*Gainſt* WORTH *ſneak'd off to ſwear*.—This ſingular circumſtance, however extraordinary, is a fact, modeſtly omitted by Mr. *Worth* in his narrative prefixed, and with equal modeſty and reſerve he touches upon other particulars, detailed in this ballad as they really happened. He was next morning apprized of their application to the Juſtice, and by advice of his friends, as a matter of ſelf-defence, tendered *his* examinations, which were admitted, and the affair is at the preſent writing *ſub judice*.——The matter has been ſince determined in the Court of King's Bench, with exemplary coſts in favour of WORTH.

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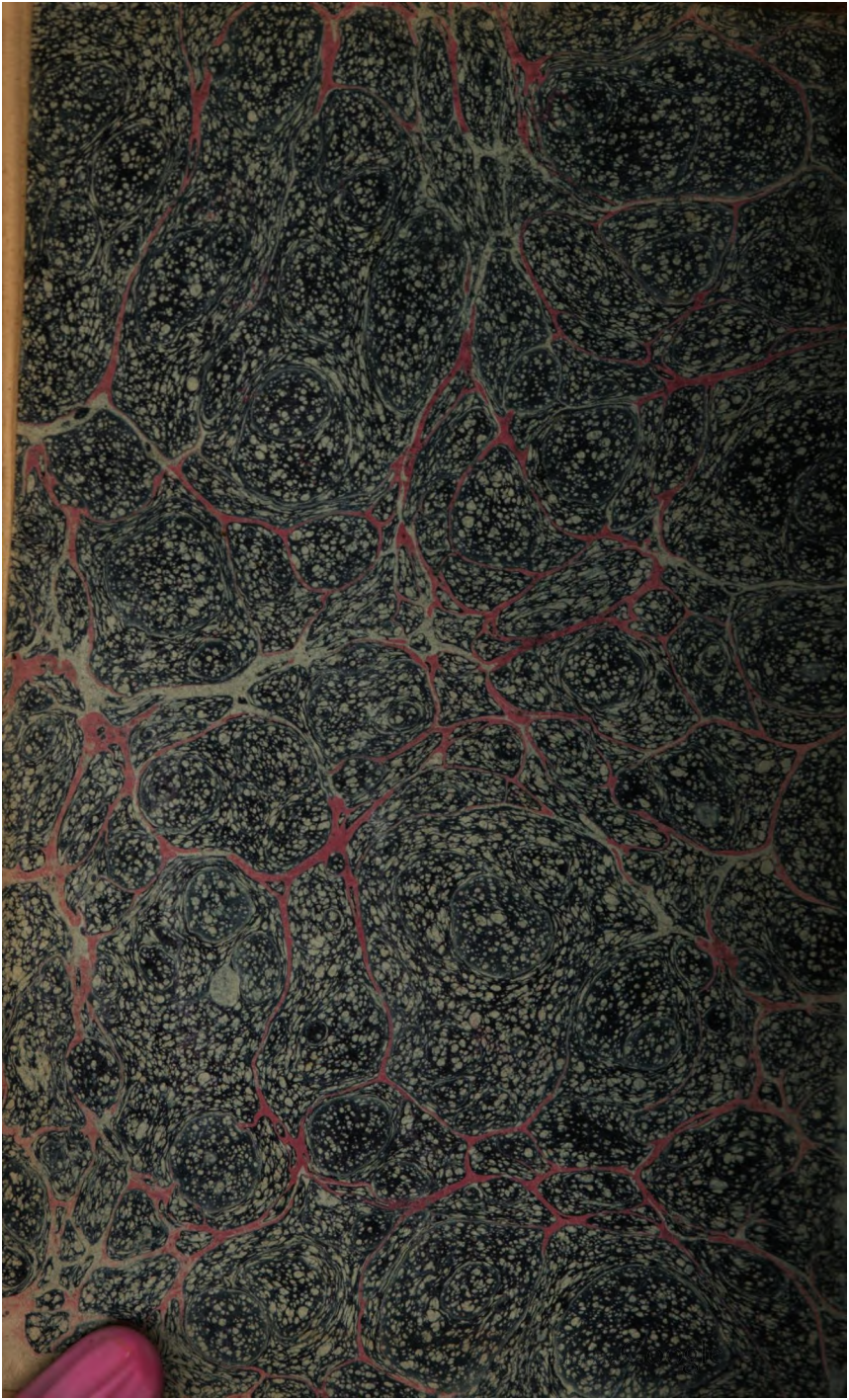
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